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QUOTES *In the
News*

"I am one of the millions of oppressed women in Iran whom they've been playing for years ... None of us matter for them, we are just tools."

Kimia Alizadeh, Iran's only female Olympic medalist, speaks publicly after leaving her homeland

WORLD | A3

"Reuniting Taiwan with the mainland using military force is no big deal, considering the difference between military forces of mainland and Taiwan. It will be easier than the PLA's liberation of Beijing 70 years ago."

Hu Jinxi, editor of one of China's hawkish publications Global Times, said in a commentary the day after Taiwan's elections.

CHINA | A4

"We need to make sure American technology doesn't power a truly Orwellian surveillance state. We need to make sure American principles aren't sacrificed for prosperity."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned business leaders at a Silicon Valley event regarding the dangers of working with the Chinese communist regime.

US | A6

"If Millennials realized what communism does to a society, I think they'd be less likely to approve of or applaud it."

Nicole Russell writes in reaction to a recent survey on Millennial approval of communism

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AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

An Iranian man confronts riot police during a demonstration outside Tehran's Amir Kabir University on Jan. 11, 2020.

IRAN

Social Media Videos Indicate Clampdown Inside Iran

Videos allegedly show protesters being confronted by regime forces with tear gas and, in some cases, live ammunition

ADAM FIELD

Iranian Protesters Confronted With Live Ammunition, Tear Gas, Videos Allegedly Show

Videos circulating on social media appear to show protesters in Iran being confronted by authorities with live ammunition and tear gas.

In one video shot in Tehran's Azadi Street and posted on Twitter on Jan. 12, a commotion can be seen along with blood on the street, allegedly from a woman having been

shot in the leg.

In another video, which appears to be related to the same incident, blood is shown on the ground, with the Twitter post saying a "plain clothed official" shot a woman and wounded her. Another video shows a man holding a gun and passing freely by uniformed riot police, with the caption claiming him to be the shooter.

Continued on A3

Videos showed people shouting, "We don't want the Islamic regime."

ATTA KENARE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Iranian students join anti-government protests in Tehran on Jan. 11, 2020.

ERIC THAYER/GETTY IMAGES



The Apple logo is displayed at the Apple Store on Fifth Avenue in New York, N.Y., on June 17, 2015.

US

AG Barr Calls on Apple to Unlock iPhones Used by Pensacola Shooter

JANITA KAN

Attorney General William Barr has called on Apple to help unlock two iPhones used by a Saudi military trainee who opened fire at a U.S. naval base last month, killing three and injuring eight others.

Continued on A7

CYBERBULLYING

Gay Conservative Student Commits Suicide After Backlash Over 'Drag Queen Story Time' Protest

MELANIE SUN

There has been an outpouring of grief from the community following the suicide of the university student who led a protest against a drag queen reading event for young children held at a Brisbane library.

Wilson Gavin—a self-described "gay conservative" who gained some media attention two years ago when campaigning against same-sex marriage—took his own life Monday morning after footage of the protesters chanting "Drag queens are not for kids" went viral on social media. The protest sparked significant backlash on social media and a rebuke from the state's Liberal National Party.

The outspoken 21-year-old, who

OUR VOICE. OUR VOTE/FACEBOOK



Young gay conservative Wilson Gavin shares why he is voting 'No' in the same-sex marriage plebiscite in Brisbane on Sept. 18, 2017.

was previously president of the University of Queensland's Liberal National Club (UQLNC), led a protest group of 15 to 20 people to confront those involved in a 'Drag Queen Story Time' event at Brisbane City

Continued on A2

PNEUMONIA UPDATE

WHO Warns That New Viral Pneumonia in China May Be Contagious

NICOLE HAO

The World Health Organization (WHO) warned on Jan. 14 that the virus behind a respiratory illness that broke out in China could be contagious.

"From the information that we have, it is possible that there is limited human-to-human transmission, potentially among families, but it is very clear right now that

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HUSSEIN FALEH/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Iraqis mourn two reporters shot dead during coverage of anti-government protests on Jan. 11, 2020.

IRAQ

2 Iraqi Journalists Shot Dead While Covering Anti-Government Protests

KATABELLA ROBERTS

Two journalists working for the Iraqi broadcaster Dajlah TV have been shot dead in the southern Iraqi city of Basra, the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad confirmed.

Correspondent Ahmed Abdel Samad and cameraman Safaa Ghali were covering protests in the city on Jan. 10, when unknown gunmen opened fire on their vehicle, killing

Continued on A3

TAIWAN ELECTIONS

In Covering Taiwan Election, Chinese State Media Distort Facts and Discredit Voter Results

NICOLE HAO

Chinese state-run media sought to dismiss Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen's re-election victory by accusing her of shady tactics, without providing evidence.

Meanwhile, officials stuck to the Chinese regime's narrative that the self-ruled island is part of its territory.

On Jan. 11, Tsai won the election by a landslide with 8.17 million votes, or 57.1 percent of the total votes. The figure was also the highest number of votes a presidential candidate has won since the island held direct presidential elections in 1996. Her chief opponent, Han Kuo-yu from

Continued on A4

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Accuracy
& Integrity

The Epoch Times was founded in 2000 to provide honest and uncensored news coverage of China. Based in New York City, our newsroom is dedicated to restoring accuracy and integrity in media. We stand outside political interests and the pursuit of profit. And we stand against the systematic destruction of traditional culture by destructive ideologies such as communism.

Scientists Support Minister’s Call to End Squabbling Over Climate Change

The nation’s science minister wants the climate change debate to end, as the government sat down with science experts to address the bushfire crisis.

Scientists have backed federal science minister Karen Andrews’ call for Australians to stop debating whether climate change is “real” and get to work on dealing with the serious threat it poses.

The science minister met with representatives of the science and technology community in Canberra on Wednesday, as the federal government sought advice on how best to handle Australia’s bushfire crisis now and into the future.

Before the meeting, Andrews said it was “time for everyone to move on” from debating climate change.

“Let’s accept that the climate has changed, the climate is changing and we need to look at what we’re going to do about that,” she told ABC radio.

The meeting heard there was a trend towards more dangerous conditions during summer and an earlier start to the fire season, particularly in parts of southern and eastern Australia.

These trends are very likely to increase into the future, with climate models showing more dangerous weather conditions for bushfires throughout Australia.

Science and Technology Australia president Jeremy Brownlie said the nation needed high quality scientific expertise as it sought to recover and rebuild from the fires, which to date have taken 28 lives and destroyed more than 2000 homes.

Associate Professor Brownlie backed Andrews’ warning that “every second spent discussing if climate change is real is a second we don’t spend addressing these issues.”

“We owe it to communities on the frontline of these terrifying bushfires to make every effort and deploy every piece of expertise and resource to tackle this existential challenge,” he said.



Amanda Shields from the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council inspects the regrowth of an *Xanthorrhoea Australis* among bushland destroyed by bushfires in Kulnura, New South Wales, on Jan. 15, 2020. The area hit by the Wrights Creek Fire in early December 2018.

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Every second spent discussing if climate change is real is a second we don’t spend addressing these issues.

Karen Andrews, Minister for Science and Technology

“Australia has deep research capabilities in bushfire mitigation, climate change, managing biodiversity, sustaining our wildlife populations and ecosystems, water catchment management, and the physical and mental health of our communities.”

The minister expressed interest in the CSIRO’s Spark bushfire prediction software, which could help frontline firefighters.

“So, for example, fires will be able to have something in their back pocket that they can then take out and go, ‘Okay, well this is where we need to be going next because this is the important fire. Is that fire about to jump a break? Is it going to come across a creek or a road?’

“So they can put the resources that they need to on a real time basis. That’s probably a bit of a missing

link at the moment.”

Roadside signage could also be improved, taking into account a greater depth of information about fire risk.

The Morrison government has pledged a \$2 billion tax-free relief package to be injected into a national bushfire recovery fund over the next two years.

It includes such measures as grants for farmers, funding for local councils, immediate disaster assistance, and support for counselling services. The government said that \$50 million has also been allocated into an emergency intervention fund for wildlife and environmental groups that are helping native flora and fauna in the recovery process.

“We need to get this cash in the hands of these producers so they can get on with the jobs that urgently

need doing,” Morrison told reporters in Canberra Jan. 14.

Morrison is also preparing to take a proposal for a bushfire royal commission to federal cabinet.

In response to opposition from the states, Morrison told reporters, “It has always been our understanding that states would be undertaking their own reviews.”

He wants the federal inquiry to review what a nationally declared state of emergency would entail and how state agencies have coped with the fires, saying that federal and state inquiries would not be in conflict.

By Paul Osborne. With additional reporting by Rebecca Gredley, Daniel McCulloch, and Finbar O’Mallon. From AAP

Gay Conservative Student Commits Suicide After Backlash Over ‘Drag Queen Story Time’ Protest

CONTINUED FROM A1

Council library on Jan. 10.

Club members explained in a post on their now-deleted Facebook page, “Today the UQLNC took a stand to defend LNP values against a corrosive gender ideology. After a ratepayer-funded Drag Queen Story Hour finished this Sunday, we decided to make a public demonstration against the Brisbane City Council endorsing it.

“We stayed outside the room in which it was being held–waited until the event was over to make our point–did not respond to the insults which were hurled at us, and left when directed by security.”

The event, where drag queens led children and their families in song, dance, reading, and craft classes, was hosted by Brisbane City Council in partnership with LGBTQIA advocacy group Rainbow Families Queensland.

Before news of the suicide broke, the club’s Facebook page had been overrun with comments from people condemning the protest. The video of Gavin and fellow protesters on social media caught the attention of leaders in the community, including federal MPs and singer Jess Origlasso of The Veronicas.

Queensland’s Liberal National Party distanced itself from the protest, saying it did not represent party values and that the university club had been disaffiliated last month.

On Monday following reports of Gavin’s suicide, Queensland Opposition Leader Deb Frecklington said in a press conference that the party would not be commenting at this



time out of respect for the family.

“I think today is a day to think about a bit of compassion and respect for people,” she said.

Friends, Opponents Respond

Rainbow Families Queensland released a statement saying, “Rainbow Families Queensland were informed earlier today that the leader of yesterday’s drag Storytime protest took his own life this morning.

“We are deeply saddened by this news and extend our sympathies to his family.”

One of the drag queens at the event told the ABC they were “deeply saddened from the news.”

“I’d really like to give my condo-

Brisbane City Council library in the Brisbane Square building in Brisbane, Queensland.

=====

They just hate everything that I love – they hate me because I’m a conservative.

Wilson Gavin

lences and sympathy to the family and friends,” Diamond said. “The support that I have received today on social media has been phenomenal, and I thank everyone for their support and kind words.”

A spokesperson for the university said that it was providing support to students and staff impacted by the tragic events.

“The university understands that the events of the past two days are very distressing for many people,” the spokesperson said.

“Mutual respect and diversity are core values of the university, and we hope that everyone shows consideration for those affected during the difficult days ahead.”

Conservative Christian blogger David Pellowe told Eternity News that he had the pleasure of interviewing Gavin in the lead up to the same-sex marriage plebiscite in 2017 to hear his views on gender identity in society.

Gavin revealed to Pellowe why he was campaigning for the ‘No’ vote and explained his conservative views based on his Catholic faith.

“They’re not going to stop at marriage,” Gavin said. “Their goal is to tear down the family and every traditional institution in Australia.

“They just hate everything that I love – they hate me because I’m a conservative. And they hate me more because I’m a gay, and I can say to them, ‘I’m gay. I’m not a homophobe, I love gay men!’

“You can’t call me a homophobe just because I oppose same sex marriage, just because I’m against your agenda. You can’t shout me down the way you can most people. You can’t shout me down by saying I’m

a bigot and I’m a homophobe.”

At the time, Gavin was the spokesperson for an organisation representing LGBTIQ voting ‘No’ called ‘Our Voice. Our Vote.’

“He was a man of conviction, and a man of compassion,” Pellowe said. “However, his detractors would like to reframe it. The truth is that he, motivated by love of neighbour felt the need to intervene in the injustice he saw being promoted.”

Fellow UQ student and friend Drew Pavlou posted on social media that Gavin “was at his core a very decent and kind person that cared for others.”

“He had his struggles and made mistakes, and it is a tragedy for us all that he ultimately succumbed to his suffering and pain.

“Today is a reminder of all we must do to affirm to young marginalized Australians the intrinsic worth and value of their lives.”

Liberal MP George Christensen responded to the tragedy by announcing that he was deleting his Twitter account.

“Suicide happens when Twitter keyboard warriors pile on an individual for a political protest. Twitter is broken. It is for ad hominem attacks & pile ons not real discourse. And it is aid[ed] & abetted by the media. I can’t delete the media but I am deleting my twitter account. Bye,” the backbencher said in his last tweet.

If you or a friend need someone to talk to, call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

The Australian Associated Press contributed to this report.

2 Iraqi Journalists Shot Dead While Covering Anti-Government Protests

CONTINUED FROM A1

them both.

Video footage posted on Dijlah TV’s website was described as showing Samad slumped in the passenger seat of the vehicle with a bullet wound to the right side of his head. Dijlah TV (or Al-Dijla), headquartered in Jordan, is one of Iraq’s most-watched news channels.

The video, which has been widely circulated on social media, also revealed at least three bullet holes in the right front door of the car.

Dijlah TV said that Ghali was taken to Basra General Hospital but died shortly after. A separate report by Iraq’s foreign-funded Al-Mirbad broadcaster said the cameraman had suffered three bullet wounds to his chest.

The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad on Jan. 11 released a statement on Twitter condemning the killings:

“The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad strongly denounces the deplorable and cowardly assassination of Dijla TV correspondent Ahmed Abdel Samad and cameraman Safaa Ghali in Basra last night.”

“The ongoing assassinations, kidnappings, harassment, and intimidation of members of the press, social media activists, and pro-reform activists in Iraq by armed groups cannot continue to go unpunished.”

The embassy put responsibility for the loss of life on the Iraqi government, which it said should be

“The ongoing assassinations, kidnappings, harassment, and intimidation of members of the press, social media activists, and pro-reform activists in Iraq by armed groups cannot continue to go unpunished.”

U.S. Embassy in Baghdad



Iraqis mourn two reporters shot dead in the country’s southern city of Basra where they had been covering months of anti-government protests on Jan. 11, 2020.

“upholding the right to freedom of expression, protecting journalists, and ensuring that peaceful activists can practice their democratic rights without fear or reprisal.”

“This can only happen if the perpetrators are found and brought to justice,” it added.

“Freedom of speech and freedom of expression are the cornerstones of democratic society. Respecting and upholding these rights is fundamental to the protection of democracy.”

Hundreds of Iraqis mourned the loss of the two reporters in a rally on Jan. 11.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), a nonprofit organization that promotes press freedom worldwide, also condemned the killings and urged Iraqi authorities to launch an investigation.

“No journalist should have to fear for their safety or be singled out for

attack over their coverage of protests,” said CPJ Middle East and North Africa representative Ignacio Miguel Delgado.

“We call on the Iraqi authorities to immediately open an investigation into the killing of Ahmed Abdul Samad and Safaa Ghali and to do their utmost to ensure journalists can cover the protests freely and without fear of reprisal,” he said.

Local reporters have said they believe the two journalists may have been assassinated by Iraq’s Iranian-backed militias for criticizing the destructive role of the Iranian regime in their country. The Epoch Times hasn’t been able to independently verify that.

Kurdistan 24 reported that hours before Samad’s death, he had posted a video on Facebook denouncing militia groups for their use of violence against protesters.

The alleged assassinations came as thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of Baghdad over the weekend to reinvigorate the anti-government protests that started in October 2019. Protesters are continuing their demands for an overhaul of a corrupt political system, and an end to foreign intervention in domestic affairs, better public services, and more jobs.

Groups within Iraq’s security forces, mostly Iran-backed militias, have been accused of killing more than 500 protesters since the start of the protests, The New York Times reported. The Wall Street Journal reported that anti-government protesters on Jan. 5 set on fire the local headquarters of an Iran-backed militia group in the southern city of Nasiriyah.

A further 19,000 have been injured since the protests began, according to the United Nations.



Iran's Kimia Alizadeh Zenoorin poses with her bronze medal on the podium after the womens taekwondo event in the 57kg category as part of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, on Aug. 18, 2016.

Iran’s Only Female Olympic Medalist Says She Has Defected

DUBAI—Iran’s only female Olympic medalist has said on social media she had left her homeland because she had had enough of being used by its authorities as a propaganda tool.

Taekwondo champion Kimia Alizadeh, who won a bronze medal at the 2016 Rio Olympics, implied in an Instagram post that she had moved to Europe. She wrote on an account she has used for some time, but it was not immediately possible to verify her location.

“No one has invited me to Europe and I haven’t been given a tempting offer. But I accept the pain and hardship of homesickness because I didn’t want to be part of hypocrisy, lies, injustice and flattery,” she said.

Mahin Farhadizadeh, a deputy Iranian sports minister, said: “I have not read Kimia’s post, but as far as I know she always wanted to continue her studies in physiotherapy,” the semi-official ISNA news agency reported.

Alizadeh said the Islamic Republic’s authorities had attributed her success to their management and the fact that she wore the Islamic veil, which is obligatory in Iran.

“I am one of the millions of oppressed women in Iran whom they’ve been playing for years... I wore whatever they told me and repeated whatever they ordered. Every sentence they ordered I repeated,” she wrote.

“I didn’t want to be part of hypocrisy, lies, injustice and flattery.”

Kimia Alizadeh, Iranian Olympic champion

“None of us matter for them, we are just tools.”

She said that while the government exploited her medals politically, officials would humiliate her with remarks such as “It is not virtuous for a woman to stretch her legs!”

Alizadeh said at the time of her medal in the 57kg category that it had made her happy for Iranian girls.

On Sunday she appeared torn by her decision.

“Should I start with hello, goodbye or condolences? Hello oppressed people of Iran,

goodbye noble people of Iran, my condolences to you people who are always mourning,” she wrote.

In the past week, 176 people, many Iranians with dual citizenship, were killed when the Iranian military mistakenly shot a Ukrainian airliner down, and at least 56 died in a stampede at the funeral for an Iranian military commander killed by a U.S. air strike.

Alizadeh is the third top Iranian sports person to stop representing the country in recent months.

In December, Iran’s Chess Federation said top rated chess champion Alireza Firouzja had decided not to play for Iran over its informal ban on competing against Israeli players.

Three months earlier, the International Judo Federation said Iranian judoka Saeid Mollaei had refused to return home over fears for his safety after he ignored orders from his national federation to pull out of fights to avoid a potential final meeting with an Israeli.

By Philippa Fletcher
From Reuters

Social Media Videos Indicate Clampdown Inside Iran

CONTINUED FROM A1

Another video shot in Azadi Street and posted on social media on Jan. 12 shows blood on the ground, with the man shooting the video saying, “Look, this is people’s blood.”

Other videos posted on the same day show people running away from tear gas in Azadi Square.

Protests erupted in different cities in Iran following the Iranian regime’s admission that the Ukraine International Airlines jet departing from Tehran’s main airport on Jan. 8 was brought down by “missiles fired due to human error,” with demonstrators shouting slogans against the Islamic regime and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The regime had initially dismissed reports that the plane was brought down by the Iranian military, blaming technical problems for the crash.

Memorial services were conducted for the 176 victims of the plane by the students of Tehran University’s School of Management, Khajeh Nassir University, the University of Science and Industry in Tehran, Bou Ali University of Hamedan, the University of Damghan, Noshirvani University of Babol, and many universities and community groups abroad.

One video shot in the northern city of Amol shows people chanting, “We don’t want the Islamic regime.” Others show demonstrators pulling down posters of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani, who was killed in a U.S. drone strike in Iraq.

Videos shot in Tehran show people chanting, “They killed our elites, and replaced them with mullahs,” and students at Sharif University chanting that “the mullahs (clerics) should get lost.”

Iran reportedly killed 1,500 people during the November 2019 protests, sparked by an overnight spike in fuel prices, according to Reuters. The news agency, citing insider sources, said the killings

were directly ordered by Khamenei.

In a veiled threat against the protesters, Iran’s head of judiciary, Ebrahim Raisi, said on Jan. 13 that security is the “red line [not to cross] for Iran’s people,” and warned against “agents of the United States and other countries” using the issue of the plane crash to distort public opinion, Iranian media reported. Iranian officials often blame protests in the country as being instigated by foreign agents.

Trump’s Warning

President Donald Trump issued a warning to the Iranian regime on Jan. 12, saying, “Don’t kill your protesters.” He also said the “sanctions & protests have Iran ‘choked off’, will force them to negotiate.” The president left a message in both Farsi and English on Twitter, in a more personal touch directed toward the protesters.

In another message written in Farsi on Twitter on Jan. 11, Trump expressed his support for the protesters: “To the brave and suffering Iranian people: I have stood with you since the beginning of my presidency and my government will continue to stand with you. We are following your protests closely. Your courage is inspiring.”

The Ukrainian plane was shot down on Jan 8, hours after Iran launched a ballistic missile attack on two military bases housing U.S. troops in Iraq in retaliation for the killing of Soleimani in Iraq by the United States. No one was killed in the attack on the bases.

Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the head of the Guard’s aerospace division, said his unit accepts full responsibility for shooting down the plane. In an address broadcast by state TV, he said that when he learned about the downing of the plane, “I wished I was dead.”

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

In Covering Taiwan Election, Chinese State Media Distort Facts and Discredit Voter Results

CONTINUED FROM A1

the Kuomintang (KMT), earned 5.52 million votes (38.6 percent), while third-party candidate James Soong won 608,590 (4.3 percent).

Voter turnout rate also reached a new high, with 14.46 million Taiwanese, or 74.9 percent of the electorate, casting their ballots.

Tsai, of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), has defended Taiwan's sovereignty and repeatedly called out Beijing's intimidation and influence campaigns on the island, angering the Chinese regime. Since she assumed office in May 2016, Beijing has consistently attacked her.

Han, on the other hand, ran on a platform of pursuing closer ties with mainland China.

Experts say Tsai's victory signified that Taiwanese citizens strongly reject Beijing's efforts to unite the island with the mainland.

'External Forces' to Blame

For mainland Chinese audiences, state media spread fake news in an effort to discredit Tsai's victory.

"The election within the Taiwan region is largely controlled by external dark forces," state-run media Xinhua said in its Jan. 11 report, spreading its usual narrative of foreign countries being the culprit behind incidents that challenge the Chinese regime.

Meanwhile, People's Daily, the official mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), analyzed on Jan. 12 that the reason why Han and KMT lost the election is because "there have been conflicts within the KMT since the beginning of the campaign, and the KMT doesn't have a strong supporter from the outside."



(L) Tsai Ing-Wen (C) with Vice President-elect William Lai (C-L) and Vice-President, Chen Chien-jen (C-R), celebrates her re-election as President of Taiwan in Taipei, Taiwan, on Jan. 11, 2020.

(R) Hong Kong supporters of Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen hold slogan as supporters gather to watch the early election returns in Taipei, Taiwan, on Jan. 11, 2020.

"The election within the Taiwan region is largely controlled by external dark forces."

China's state-run media Xinhua said in a Jan. 11 report

The article also claimed that U.S. and other Western forces "publicly interfered in Taiwan election... The United States pushed a series of policies supporting Taiwan...and indulged the DPP in fighting the mainland," the report said.

"This is a dirty election without any impartiality," People's Daily said in an editorial published on Jan. 12.

The hawkish newspaper Global Times used harsh language to warn Tsai on Jan. 11: "If Tsai and the DPP government keep on leading Taiwan in the opposite direction, they will surely become historical sinners, who will be criticized by people on both sides of the strait and will receive retribution."

Spinning the News

Xinhua, which serves as the Chinese regime's official news agency, published an article on the election results late on Jan. 11, first criticizing the performance of Tsai's government in the past three years. "People's livelihood are getting worse and worse, while democracy [in Taiwan] keeps



going backwards... this prompted the deliberate use of all resources within the party, government, and military to campaign [for Tsai]."

Beijing's disinformation campaign, initiated in the lead-up to Taiwan's 2018 local elections, spread the idea that economic ties with mainland China would improve Taiwanese people's livelihood.

The Xinhua article accused Tsai of spreading disinformation instead. "First, she crazily spent hundreds of billion of Taiwan dollars [1 TWD = 0.033 USD] to launch policies in an effort to buy voters' support. Second, she hired an internet army to defame her competitors. Third, she enlarged the threat from the mainland... scaring people."

In fact, in the lead-up to the January election, the Chinese regime twice sent its newest aircraft carrier to the Taiwan strait, a move denounced by Taipei as military intimidation. The regime has never ruled out using military force to take Taiwan.

And previously in 2018, media such as Foreign Policy magazine

traced popular Facebook fan pages for Han—who was eventually elected to mayor of the southern Taiwanese city of Kaohsiung—to a Chinese cybergroup.

Since September 2019, Chinese state-run media and the KMT have claimed that Tsai's government policies, such as offering pensions to farmers, were attempts to buy people's support.

In fact, that policy was proposed long before the presidential race—in September 2018.

Comments from Beijing

Chinese officials also issued their opinion, emphasizing Beijing's policy of unifying Taiwan with the mainland.

Despite Taiwanese voters favoring Tsai's repudiation of Beijing's "one country, two systems" proposal for annexing the island, officials stuck to their talking points.

Ma Xiaoguang, spokesman of the Taiwan Affairs Office of China's State Council, told media on Jan. 11: "We would like to promote cross-strait relations under the common political basis of '92 Consensus' and being 'against Taiwan independence.'"

Under the "1992 Consensus," Taipei and Beijing agreed that there is "one China," but both sides can interpret what the "one China" is. In the mainland, the Chinese regime claims itself as the "one China" and Taiwan as one of its provinces. Meanwhile, Taiwan recognizes itself, officially the Republic of China, as the sole legitimate representative of China.

Tsai and the DPP do not accept the "92 Consensus," saying that Taiwan is a sovereign nation and that the consensus is simply another codename for Beijing's desire to unify Taiwan.



A banner is reflected in a polished surface as Chinese President Xi Jinping, center, speaks during an event to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Message to Compatriots in Taiwan at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Jan. 2, 2019.

China Holds Military Drill on the Day of Taiwan Election

OLIVIA LI

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) held a military drill on Jan. 11, the day of Taiwan's presidential election. Shortly after President Tsai Ing-wen's re-election victory, Chinese state-run media warned that Beijing could resort to military action to reunite Taiwan with the mainland.

The military drill was conducted by the 73rd Group Army, one of the three active group armies belonging to the Eastern Theater Command of the PLA. Based in Xiamen City, Fujian Province, a coastal city facing Taiwan across the strait, it is presumed to be China's main military force to attack Taiwan should Beijing ever declare war on the self-ruled island.

The Chinese regime claims Taiwan as part of its territory, and has not renounced the use of force to take it under its control. Taiwan, formally known as the "Republic of China," has its own democratically-elected government, military, and currency.

The Eastern Theater Command posted a statement on Jan. 11 about the drill on Chinese social media WeChat, which began with a poem, "A drill is no different than a real battle, soldiers are instantly surrounded by the smoke of

war." The military drill followed the most strict and challenging standards, the statement said. Photos of CAIC Z-10 attack helicopters and a Mi-17 Medium helicopter were posted to show off the PLA's military strength.

Photos taken during the drill revealed that the Army Aviation Unit of the 73rd Group used Type 052D and Type 052C destroyers, two Type 075 landing helicopter docks, and a variety of military helicopters, including CAIC Z-10 attack helicopters and the Harbin Z-20. In addition, armored brigades and artillery brigades acted as supporting units in the drill.

According to the post, the main purpose of the drill was to "oppose those who advocate Taiwan independence" and "to prevent foreign forces from interfering in China-Taiwan affairs."

Chinese state media also reported the drill, and pointed out that, "the choice of the drill date is worth pondering," possibly a hint that the drill is meant to threaten Taiwanese citizens not to vote for an anti-communist candidate.

On the same day, the PLA's Eastern Theater Command Navy, also known as the East

Sea Fleet, announced that a destroyer detachment would conduct an actual five-day-and-four-night combat training on the ocean. Type 052D and Type 052C destroyers would participate, and there would be live fire drills as well as air defense and missile defense drills, it said.

Post-Election Warning

Shortly after Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen was re-elected, Chinese state-run media warned about military action to reunite Taiwan with the mainland.

Hu Jinxin, editor of China's hawkish publication Global Times, published a commentary on Jan. 12, the day after Taiwan's election, suggesting that using military force on Taiwan is now high on China's agenda.

"Reuniting Taiwan with the mainland using military force is no big deal, considering the difference between military forces of mainland and Taiwan. It will be easier than the PLA's liberation of Beijing 70 years ago," Hu claimed.

He pointed out the real challenge that China has to prepare itself for is the military intervention or economic sanctions from the United States.

"Strategically, we need absolute certainties in two aspects. First of all, we must be able to easily make the U.S. army suffer an unbearable loss if they come to intervene. Moreover, we must make sure that the United States would not dare to launch a large-scale retaliation against China, nor would it dare to threaten China with a nuclear war," Hu wrote.

"Secondly, China must surpass the United States in economic strength, so that the United States would be incapable of sanctioning China, or uniting the Western forces to impose sweeping sanctions on China. In other words, when China uses military force to unite with Taiwan, [we want to make sure that] our military action will not incur serious economic uncertainties to our country."

China Pressures World Into Silence on Its Human Rights Record: Report

CATHY HE

The Chinese regime's intensifying efforts to thwart global scrutiny of its human rights abuses pose an "existential threat" to the international system, a rights group said on Jan. 14.

Human Rights Watch (HRW), a U.S.-based nonprofit, in an annual report documenting human rights conditions around the world, said the Chinese regime is carrying out the "most pervasive and brutal oppression in decades." Meanwhile, outside its borders, Beijing is using its economic clout to silence its critics and extend its censorship to the rest of the world.

"No other government flexes its political muscles with such vigor and determination to undermine the international human rights standards and institutions that could hold it to account," Kenneth Roth, HRW's executive director, wrote in the report, released on Jan. 14.

Roth experienced this firsthand when he was denied entry to Hong Kong on Jan. 12, where he was due to hold a press conference about the report. The city has been roiled by ongoing pro-democracy protests against the Chinese regime's increasing encroachment into the city's freedoms and autonomy.

"I had hoped to spotlight Beijing's deepening assault on international efforts to uphold human rights," Roth said in a statement on Jan. 12. "The refusal to let me enter Hong Kong vividly illustrates the problem."

Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam on Jan. 14 declined to comment on Roth's case. Earlier, however, China's foreign ministry spokesperson indicated that the Chinese regime had been involved in the decision to bar entry.

"It is China's sovereign right to decide who shall be granted entry and who shall be denied it," Geng Shuang said at a regular briefing on Jan. 13.

Geng also suggested the refusal was linked to the nonprofit's advocacy regarding the Hong Kong protests. He accused the group of "inciting violence" and "separatist activities" in the city.

Roth, at a Jan. 14 press conference at the United Nations in New York City, dismissed the explanation as "preposterous," saying that it's "frankly ludicrous [to suggest] that my colleagues

and I have the capacity to mobilize a million people or more on the streets repeatedly over the last six months."

The Chinese regime has consistently framed the demonstrations as the work of foreign forces inciting protesters from behind the scenes.

"The Chinese government is terrified of admitting this genuine desire for democracy on territory that they rule," Roth said. "Because if they admit that this is an indigenous, natural, and spontaneous desire, rather than what they claim is a foreign imposition ... then what's happening in Hong Kong might spread to the mainland—and that's really the big fear."

In December, Beijing announced sanctions on HRW and other U.S.-based nonprofits in retaliation to the United States enacting the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, which supports the city's protest movement and threatens to impose sanctions on Chinese and Hong Kong officials involved in rights abuses in the city.

In a section on Hong Kong, the HRW report said Hong Kong police used "excessive force" to disperse protesters, including by "beating those subdued on the ground." It added that police have "increasingly restricted freedom of assembly" in the city.

In the mainland, the regime has continued to repress religious and ethnic minorities, independent journalists, judges, and activists, the report said.

The communist regime, the report noted, has undermined international institutions designed to protect human rights, such as the United Nations, where it uses its veto power to block measures that support persecuted groups worldwide. It has also worked to block international groups from independently examining human rights conditions in the country.

The report also said Beijing uses access to the Chinese market as leverage to threaten companies for criticizing the regime. For example, a comment on Twitter by the general manager of the Houston Rockets in support of Hong Kong protesters last October prompted all Chinese sponsors of the National Basketball Association to pull their partnerships in China.

US Trade Deal Ends China’s ‘Slow Walk’ of Trade Violation Enforcement

CHRISS STREET

News Analysis
The Trump administration’s 86-page Phase 1 trade agreement requires “regular meetings” to assure that China does not continue to “slow walk” compliance with its promises. The Phase 1 truce commits China to respect U.S. intellectual property rights, not to engage in currency manipulation and to buy \$200 billion in goods and agricultural products to help narrow America’s \$419 billion trade deficit. In addition, it also revives President Trump’s semi-annual U.S.-China Comprehensive Economic Dialogue (CED) that met only once in July 2017 before the launch of the Sino-U.S. trade war.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) claims that the 500 trade disputes filed by members have been settled in an average of 14 months. Since the Clinton administration negotiated the November 1999 agreement paving the way for China’s entry, the United States has filed 124 WTO complaints and won about 85 percent of complaints.

But the Trump administration’s “2018 Report to Congress on China’s WTO Compliance” states that the United States had been forced to “resort to the WTO’s dispute settlement mechanism to change problematic Chinese policies and practices” 23 times regarding: (1) local content requirements; (2) discriminatory taxes; (3) hundreds of prohibited manufacturing subsidies; (4) inadequate intellectual property rights and enforcement in the copyrights; (5) market access barriers; (6) restrictions on suppliers of financial information services; (7) export restraints on raw materials; (8) market access for foreign electronic payment services; (9) abusive use of trade remedies; (10) domestic agricultural commodities support; (11) protectionist tariff-rate quotas; (12) and discriminatory technology licensing.

The report concludes that China’s WTO entry has “proven to be inef-



U.S. President Donald Trump shakes hands with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He after announcing a “phase one” trade agreement with China in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington on Oct. 11, 2019.

China’s ability to delay WTO enforcement rulings for years is based on retention of its “special and differential treatment” as a developing nation, despite having the world’s second largest economy.

fective in securing China’s embrace of an open, market-oriented approach to the economy and trade.” Furthermore, the WTO enforcement rulings have been ineffective because “Chinese government officials responsible for enforcement are often beholden to local interests and unwilling to enforce judgments against locally powerful companies or individuals.”

China’s ability to delay WTO enforcement rulings for years is based on retention of its “special and differential treatment” as a developing nation, despite having the world’s second largest economy. According to WTO developing nation status rules, China is legally allowed to provide subsidies in agriculture and set

higher barriers to market entry than nations defined as developed, like the United States.

The Obama administration continued the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) set up by the Bush administration to help “level the playing field for U.S. workers and firms.” But the S&ED’s eight meetings under Obama prioritized efforts to induce China to “deepen cooperation on global challenges such as a climate change.”

The S&ED was renamed as the “Comprehensive Economic Dialogue” under the Trump administration and was held in July 2017. That meeting between the U.S. and Chinese delegates “turned more into criticism and lost its focus on out-

comes, according to news website Industry Global News24. It also added, “the process was later abandoned as it got argumentative and the Trump administration pressurized China for economic concessions.”

The next U.S.-China Comprehensive Economic Dialogue meeting is expected to be scheduled soon after the signing ceremony for the Phase 1 trade truce on Jan. 15 in Washington D.C., the Wall Street Journal reported. The Chinese authorities acknowledged that the semi-annual “discussions” are part of the settlement, as the meetings provide a “platform for conversations that will ensure firm and smooth relationships ahead,” Industry Global News24 said.

WHO Warns That New Viral Pneumonia in China May Be Contagious

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we have no sustained human-to-human transmission,” Maria Van Kerkhove, acting head of WHO’s emerging diseases unit, said Jan. 14. The WHO is preparing for the possibility that there could be a wider outbreak, she said at a news briefing in Geneva.

Chinese authorities identified a new type of coronavirus as the pathogen causing a new form of severe pneumonia that originated in the central city of Wuhan.

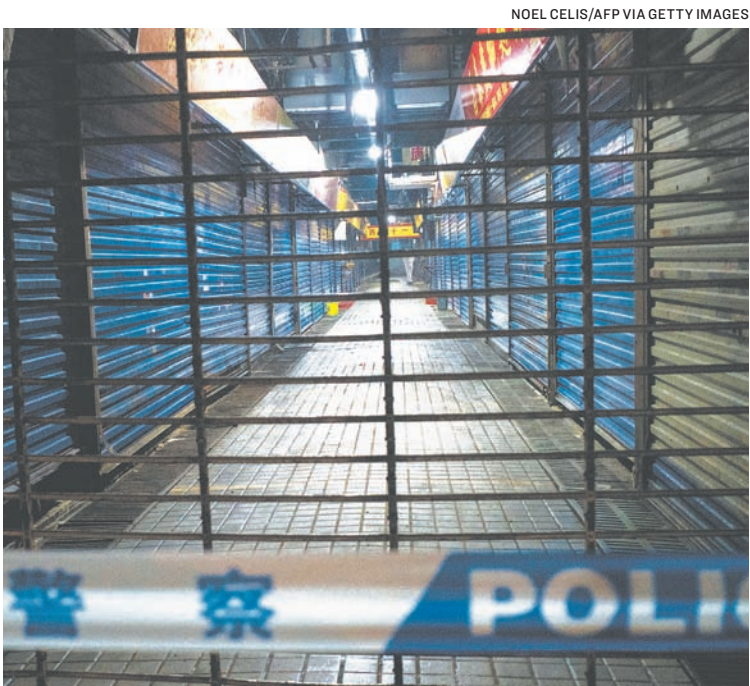
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, some of which cause the common cold, while others found in bats, camels, and other animals have evolved into more severe illnesses.

The United Nations agency also said it’s offered guidance to hospitals worldwide about infection prevention and control in case the new virus spreads. There is no specific treatment for the new virus, but anti-virals are being considered and could be “repurposed,” Van Kerkhove said.

China Updates
The Wuhan Municipal Health Commission said Jan. 14 that there’s no obvious evidence that the disease could be transmitted between humans. However, it conceded that among the 41 patients diagnosed with the illness, there is one husband-wife couple.

The husband works at the Huanan Seafood Market, which has been linked to the outbreak, and was the first of the couple to exhibit symptoms. His wife, who hadn’t been to the market, later began to cough and developed a fever, according to authorities.

The market has been closed by the



health commission since Jan. 1.

Several patients visited or worked at the seafood market, which also sells wild game. But authorities said they haven’t yet identified the cause of the illness, and are continuing to investigate.

Also, state-run media Beijing News previously reported that two patients were confirmed to be a mother and son, with the latter a poultry shop vendor at the market. The mother, who frequently goes to the market to deliver food to her son, first exhibited symptoms of pneumonia. The son, a middle-aged man, later began running a fever, according to the Jan. 2 report.

The health commission also said no new patients have been infected since Dec. 29, 2019, and seven have since been released from the hospital. A 61-year-old man died, while six are in severe condition.

Former Chinese health ministry official Chen Bingzhong told Epoch

Members of staff of the Wuhan Hygiene Emergency Response Team conduct searches on the closed Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in the city of Wuhan, China, on Jan. 11, 2020.

On Jan. 13, Thailand’s public health ministry said a female Chinese tourist has been diagnosed with the Wuhan pneumonia, in the first confirmed case outside Wuhan.

Times affiliate NTD in an interview that it’s irresponsible for Chinese authorities to not be forthcoming with information about the disease, even prohibiting media from reporting about it.

Hong Kong media reported Jan. 14 that while reporters from several outlets were filming outside the Wuhan hospital where patients were being treated, hospital staff stopped them and brought them to a local police station, where they were questioned for roughly an hour and a half before being released.

Former Chinese NGO worker Yang Zhanqing raised concerns that Chinese authorities didn’t follow up on suspected cases in China, as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and other Asian regions have quarantined people who recently visited Wuhan and exhibited symptoms.

“This means many more people have not been tracked down [in China], causing its spread,” he told NTD.

Thailand Update
On Jan. 13, Thailand’s public health ministry said a female Chinese tourist has been diagnosed with the Wuhan pneumonia, in the first confirmed case outside Wuhan.

The patient, who has recovered, is still in Thailand. Authorities didn’t provide further details about the patient’s background or how she may have contracted the illness.

With Chinese New Year approaching on Jan. 25, when many Chinese tourists visit Thailand, the WHO called on Thai authorities and the general public to be on alert. Richard Brow, the agency’s representative in Thailand, said anyone with a fever and cough who had spent time in Wuhan should be checked by a health worker.

Hong Kong
Meanwhile, Hong Kong has sent a delegation to Wuhan to learn about the illness. Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam said at a Jan. 14 press conference that she would provide further updates after a scheduled meeting with local health experts on Jan. 15.

While dozens of patients with pneumonia-like symptoms have been identified and hospitalized in Hong Kong, Lam said there have been no confirmed cases of the Wuhan pneumonia in Hong Kong.

Authorities released the virus’s complete genetic sequence on Jan. 11, allowing public health professionals to detect whether a patient has the same illness that was first confirmed by Wuhan health authorities on Dec. 31, 2019.

Australia
A spokesperson for Australia’s Department of Health has told The Epoch Times that no international travellers with suspected coronavirus have been identified at Australia’s borders.

Although the WHO has not recommended specific measures for travellers in relation to the virus, the spokesperson said that “Australia has well established processes in place for screening of ill travellers arriving at our international air and sea ports. This includes identification of ill travellers, isolation, and referral to hospital where indicated.

“The Department of Health is closely monitoring this situation in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the states and territories,” the spokesperson said.

Reuters and Epoch Times staff writer Frank Fang contributed to this report.

Senator Says He'll Force Vote on Hunter Biden Testimony If GOP Supports Impeachment Witnesses

ZACHARY STIEBER

Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) said he will force a vote on calling Hunter Biden to the witness stand in the Senate impeachment trial if his colleagues support Democrat calls for ex-National Security Adviser John Bolton to testify.

“My colleagues can’t have it both ways. Calling for some, while blocking others,” Paul said on Twitter.

He shared a Politico report that said Paul warned colleagues at a Republican lunch last week that they couldn’t vote for Bolton and not vote on witnesses that President Donald Trump wants.

Paul told fellow GOP members that conservative voters would be upset if lawmakers who could be unseated were undercutting Trump.

“If we are going to give a platform to witnesses the Dems demand, I look forward to forcing votes to call Hunter Biden and many more!” Paul added on Twitter.

Biden was at the heart of Trump’s July phone call with Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky. Trump accused Biden and his father, former Vice President and current 2020 Democrat Joe Biden, of corruption related to Ukraine. Hunter Biden served on the board of the energy company Burisma from 2014 to 2019 and Joe Biden admitted last year that he pressured Ukraine’s leadership in 2016 to oust the prosecutor who was probing Burisma.

Both Bidens have denied wrongdoing.



Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) talks to reporters as he heads to the U.S. Capitol in Washington on March 5, 2019.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) has repeatedly called on four Republican senators to vote with his 47 members to bring witnesses in during the trial. He wants Bolton, acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, Robert Blair, a senior adviser to Mulvaney, and Michael Duffey,

associate director for national security at the Office of Management and Budget, to testify.

The witnesses have “direct knowledge of administration decisions regarding the delay in security assistance funds to the government of Ukraine and the requests for certain investigations to be announced

by the government of Ukraine,” Schumer wrote in a letter to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.).

Some have wondered about Schumer pushing to vote on witnesses.

“I’m a bit baffled why Democrats are so enthusiastic about forcing witness votes to embarrass GOP senators,” former top McConnell aide Josh Holmes wrote on Twitter on Monday. “That seems like a terrific way to end up with Hunter Biden in the chair.”

Law professor Jonathan Turley, who testified during the impeachment inquiry, said that Biden “would be a relevant defense witness” in a conventional trial.

McConnell hasn’t ruled out witnesses but said he has the votes to start the trial without voting on the matter, citing precedent during the trial of President Bill Clinton.

“The 1999 precedent does not guarantee witnesses or foreclose witnesses,” McConnell said on the Senate floor last week.

Trump was impeached last month. The Senate was expected to receive the impeachment articles soon after House Democrats withheld them for more than a month. The caucus was meeting on Tuesday morning and would discuss sending the articles over, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said.

Pelosi said over the weekend that holding the articles got a “positive result” but McConnell said Monday that it “achieved absolutely nothing.”

Official Who Leaked Documents on Trump Associates Faces Up to 5 Years in Prison

IVAN PENTCHOUKOV

Former Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) senior official Natalie Mayflower Sours Edwards faces up to five years in prison after she pleaded guilty on Jan. 13 to conspiring to illegally leak documents to a journalist.

Federal prosecutors from the Southern District of New York tentatively outlined a zero-to-six-month sentence and a fine of up to \$9,500 as part of the plea deal signed by Edwards on Jan. 13. The crime she pleaded guilty to carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

Between October 2017 and October 2018, Edwards illegally leaked suspicious activity reports (SARs) on financial transactions by former Trump-campaign associates Paul Manafort and Rick Gates, the Russian Embassy, and Maria Butina, among others.

The Department of Justice didn’t identify the news organization that published stories based on the leaks, but a review of court documents and published articles points to BuzzFeed News.

In court documents, prosecutors didn’t designate anyone as a co-conspirator. The count Edwards pleaded guilty to singled out a reporter as well as a senior official at FinCEN. Edwards called the senior official “Enigma”; she had sought to connect him or her with the reporter.

Edwards had access to the SARs on Manafort, Gates, and others, and she saved thousands of reports on a flash drive issued by FinCEN, according to a press release issued by the Department of Justice. She relayed the information in the reports to a journalist by taking pictures of the documents with a smartphone and sending the photos via an encrypted messaging application.

Edwards had the flash drive and the phone in her possession when she was arrested in October 2018. During an initial questioning, she denied having any contact with the media, but eventually admitted to communicating with the reporter, including during two in-person meetings.

In addition to the SARs, Edwards sent or described to the reporter



The emblem of the U.S. Treasury Department in Washington.

“internal FinCEN emails or correspondence appearing to relate to SARs,” investigative memos and intelligence assessments that “contained confidential personal information, business information, and/or security threat assessments,” the press release states.

Edwards is scheduled to be sentenced on June 9, 2020.

She’s one of a handful of leakers to be prosecuted during the Trump administration.

On Oct. 16, 2018, two days after Edwards’ arrest, former security director for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, James Wolfe, pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his contacts with reporters.

On Oct. 18, 2018, two days after Wolfe’s guilty plea, a federal judge sentenced former FBI special agent Terry Albury to four years in prison for leaking classified documents to a reporter.

In August 2019, IRS analyst John Fry pleaded guilty to leaking sensitive financial documents about Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump’s former personal attorney.

In the four months following Trump’s inauguration on Jan. 20, 2017, the White House was subject to 125 leaked stories, according to a report by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. The rate of leaks with the capacity to damage national security was seven times higher than during comparable periods in the administrations of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

Between October 2017 and October 2018, Edwards illegally leaked suspicious activity reports on financial transactions by former Trump-campaign associates Paul Manafort and Rick Gates, the Russian Embassy, and Maria Butina, among others.

New Cybersecurity Rules Give Regime Control of Data Outside China, Warns US

EMEL AKAN

WASHINGTON—The U.S. government is “very concerned” about China’s new cybersecurity measures that put American companies at risk of losing sensitive data.

Beijing enacted in October 2019 a cryptography law that came into effect on Jan. 1. The new legislation, combined with comprehensive cybersecurity measures China has been passing in the past several years, creates a suite of challenges for foreign companies operating in the country.

“We’re very concerned about laws like we’re seeing—like that one in China,” Robert Strayer, the deputy assistant secretary of state for cyber and international communications and information policy, said Jan 10 at a press briefing.

The companies will be required to turn over encryption keys, which are crucial to protect the confidentiality of information transmitted and stored on networks, making networks transparent to the Chinese communist regime.

The new rules should alarm telecom operators around the world, Strayer said, as the measures would allow Beijing to have “access to the data that’s residing on the networks that would be then in a third country, say in Europe or somewhere else.”

Chinese officials, once they gain access to the network of a foreign company in China, will be able to penetrate the networks of that company outside the country as well.

“That kind of extraterritorial ability for the Chinese government to reach out is certainly in the realm of the possible,” Strayer said.

He warned that companies wouldn’t have the ability to oppose the Chinese regime’s demand by going to an independent judiciary or appealing to rule-of-law institutions to stop that kind of extraterritorial reach.

China’s new cybersecurity rules are expected to have significant repercussions for foreign companies operating in China. The regime has been implementing policies to govern data, including data localization, which forces both foreign and

Chinese entities to store their data locally. The new cryptography law is the latest effort to access companies’ sensitive data and communication.

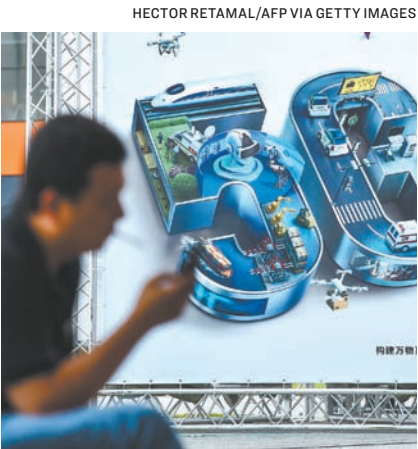
Since foreign companies “will no longer be permitted to encrypt data end-to-end, they will almost certainly be considered as violating U.S. rules for tech stored on a network in China,” author and China expert Gordon Chang said in a report.

Some U.S. lawmakers have raised concerns about China’s new cybersecurity rules, even calling on businesses to stop working with China.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Jan. 13 warned of the dangers of working with the Chinese communist regime, imploring them not to let U.S. technology “power a truly Orwellian surveillance state.”

“We need to make sure that our companies don’t do deals that strengthen a competitor’s military or tighten the regime’s grip of repression in parts of that country,” Pompeo told a meeting of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco. The group is an association of more than 350 companies in the California tech hub.

“We need to make sure American technology doesn’t power a truly Orwellian surveillance state. We need to make sure American principles aren’t sacrificed for prosperity,” he said.



A man looks at his smartphone as he passes by an advertising poster about 5G internet at the Mobile World Congress (MWC 2019) in Shanghai on June 26, 2019.

Texas Opts Out of Accepting Refugees in 2020

CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON

Texas became the first state to opt out of receiving refugees in fiscal year 2020 under a new initiative that gives U.S. states and counties more autonomy in refugee resettlement.

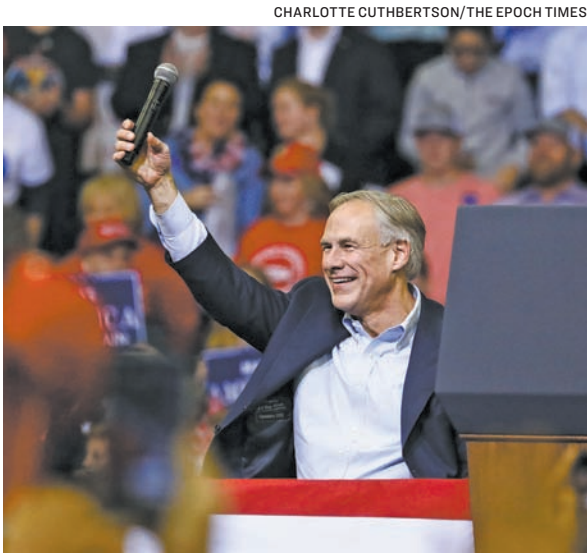
“Texas is one of the most welcoming states for refugees seeking to escape dangers abroad,” Texas Gov. Greg Abbott wrote in a Jan. 10 letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. “In addition to accepting refugees all these years, Texas has been left by Congress to deal with disproportionate migration issues resulting from a broken federal immigration system.”

Abbott said Texas has resettled about 10 percent of all refugees entering the United States over the past 10 years, and also dealt with a disproportionate number of illegal immigrants who cross into the border state.

“At this time, the state and non-profit organizations have a responsibility to dedicate available resources to those who are already here, including refugees, migrants, and the homeless,” Abbott wrote. “This decision does not deny any refugee access to the United States. Nor does it preclude a refugee from later coming to Texas after initially settling in another state.”

It’s unclear how Abbott’s decision will affect Texas’s Bexar County, which had already opted into the refugee program in November, according to a letter sent to Pompeo by County Judge Nelson Wolff.

“Refugees are resilient, hard workers whose innovative skills have contributed greatly to our state,” Wolff wrote. “They have opened businesses, revitalized towns, and are productive members of our community.”



(L) Texas Gov. Greg Abbott at a Make America Great Again rally in Houston, Texas, on Oct. 22, 2018.



(R) A migrant wears a cap depicting the U.S. flag as he and others wait for humanitarian visas from migration authorities outside El Chaparral port of entry in Tijuana, Baja California state, Mexico on Dec. 24, 2019.

“This decision does not deny any refugee access to the United States. Nor does it preclude a refugee from later coming to Texas after initially settling in another state.”

Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas

In September 2019, President Donald Trump issued an executive order that gave states and counties the power to opt in or out of accepting refugees in their locales.

Before that, the State Department would assign each refugee to a sponsor—one of nine nonprofit resettlement agencies—which would then determine placement of that refugee.

The nine nonprofits are Church World Service, Ethiopian Community Development Council, Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service, Episcopal Migration Ministries, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Hebrew International Aid Society (HIAS), World Relief, and International Rescue Committee.

A resettlement agency receives a one-time payment per refugee to assist with expenses during a refugee’s first three months in the United States, according to the State Department.

Mark Hetfield, president and CEO of HIAS, called Abbott’s decision “shameful.”

“Texas has a long and proud history of welcoming refugees,” he said in a statement on Jan. 10.

He said HIAS, along with Church World Service and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, has filed a lawsuit to overturn Trump’s executive order and the administration’s “unlawful and immoral policies targeting refugees.”

Thirty-seven states, six counties, and nine cities have so far notified the State Department that they will take in refugees in fiscal year 2020, which began Oct. 1, 2019.

Two counties have so far opted out—Appomattox County in Virginia, and Beltrami County in Minnesota. While neither county has resettled refugees for several years, both county leaderships have said their county doesn’t have the budget to support refugee resettlement.

The United States will accept around 18,000 refugees in fiscal 2020, which has been progressively reduced from the 2016 ceiling of 110,000.

The administration has said the reduction will compensate for the hundreds of thousands of new asylum claims from illegal aliens, mostly from Central America, as

well as the backlog of more than 1 million asylum-seekers who are already inside the United States and who are awaiting adjudication of their claims.

Currently, more than 1,000 refugees are being resettled each month, with 3,219 resettled in the final three months of 2019—96 percent of whom are from Afghanistan.

While refugees and asylees must meet the same criteria and are granted the same benefits, refugees must apply outside of the country, whereas asylees claim credible fear once inside the United States.

The general definition applies to an alien who has experienced past persecution or has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) spent more than \$96 billion on programs supporting or benefitting refugees between 2005 and 2014, according to White House data. HHS surveys show that 45 percent of refugees arriving between 2011 and 2015 were receiving cash assistance and 49 percent were receiving Medicaid.

Pompeo said the United States has welcomed almost 3.8 million refugees and asylees since 1980.

“Our support for displaced people also takes the form [of] humanitarian assistance, and in fiscal year 2019, the United States contributed nearly \$9.3 billion to supporting crisis response globally, the largest contribution of any country in the world,” Pompeo said on Nov. 2, 2019.

The majority of the United States’ refugee aid goes to assisting refugees in the areas where they are concentrated after displacement, such as Bangladesh, Colombia, and Turkey, according to the State Department.



Images of two Apple iPhones that the Pensacola naval base shooter, Royal Saudi Air Force 2nd Lt. Mohammed Alshamrani, tried to destroy are on display at a press conference at the Justice Department in Washington on Jan. 13, 2020.

AG Barr Calls on Apple to Unlock iPhones Used by Pensacola Shooter

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Barr made the request during a press conference on Monday while announcing the findings of the criminal investigation into the Dec. 6 shooting at Pensacola Naval Air Station in Florida.

“We have asked Apple for their help in unlocking the shooter’s iPhones. So far Apple has not given us any substantive assistance,” Barr said. “This situation perfectly illustrates why it is critical that investigators be able to get access to digital evidence once they have obtained a court order based on probable cause.”

“We call on Apple and other technology companies to help us find a solution so that we can better protect the lives of Americans and prevent future attacks,” he added.

The shooter, Royal Saudi Air Force 2nd Lt. Mohammed Alshamrani, 21, open-fired at the naval base in an attack that lasted for about 15 minutes before he was fatally shot by police during a gunfight. Alshamrani was a flight student at Pensacola, where members of foreign militaries are routinely trained by

the United States.

During the exchange of fire, Alshamrani disengaged long enough to place one of the phones on the floor and shoot a single round into the device, Barr said. He added that the other phone was also damaged.

Barr said experts at the FBI crime lab were able to fix both of the damaged phones so they are operational but have not been able to unlock the password-protected and encrypted phones.

The attorney general says it is important to obtain access to the phones in order to find out with whom the shooter was communicating and the content of his conversations prior to the attack.

Federal officials are calling the Dec. 6 shooting an “act of terrorism.” They say investigators found evidence that Alshamrani was motivated by jihadist ideology, including a social media message posted on Sept. 11 last year, stating, “The countdown has begun,” and other anti-American, anti-Israel, and jihadist messages on social media,

as recent as two hours before his attack. Alshamrani also visited the 9/11 Memorial in New York City during the Thanksgiving weekend.

Investigators say they are still continuing their probe and are looking for evidence of co-conspirators in the attack.

Justice Department officials said Apple has provided timely and substantial assistance to other parts of the criminal investigation such as responding to warrants issued to iCloud accounts. However, they added that Apple has not indicated they are willing to assist the FBI in gaining access to the phones after the bureau asked the company for help.

Last week, FBI general counsel Dana Boente sent a letter to Apple asking the company to assist with unlocking the phones. Boente told the company that the investigation was a “high-priority national security matter,” reported the Associated Press.

Apple did not immediately respond to our request to comment, but in a statement to the news wire last week, Apple said, “We have the greatest respect for law enforcement and have always worked cooperatively to help in their investigations. When the FBI requested information from us relating to this case a month ago we gave them all of the data in our possession and we will continue to support them with the data we have available.”

This case is the latest standoff between the government and big tech on the extent companies have to comply with government requests to assist with unlocking encrypted devices or social media accounts in investigations. In 2015, the Justice Department sued Apple after it resisted government efforts to gain access to an iPhone belonging to the shooter in San Bernardino, California, who killed 14 people in a terrorist attack. The FBI put a hold on the court order after it found another way to get into the phone.

FBI Director ‘Deeply Regrets’ FISA Court Errors in Surveillance of Trump Adviser

KATABELLA ROBERTS

FBI Director Christopher Wray has apologized to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC) for the way it conducted surveillance of former Trump campaign adviser Carter Page during the 2016 election.

The FBI headquarters instructed the New York field office to open a counterintelligence investigation into Page shortly after he joined Trump’s campaign, according to details from a report released in December last year by the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Inspector General (OIG).

The bureau believed he was “collaborating and conspiring with the Russian government” at that time, a claim which he repeatedly denied and that has proven to be untrue by Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s lengthy investigation.

In a court filing made public on Jan. 11, Wray expressed “deep regret” over the bureau’s errors and outlined steps that it is taking to ensure it doesn’t make the same mistakes again.

“The FBI has the utmost respect for this court, and deeply regrets the errors and omissions identified by the (OIG Office of the Inspector General)” Wray wrote in the letter, before describing the agency’s conduct as “unacceptable and unrepresentative of the FBI as an institution.”

“FISA is an indispensable tool in national security investigations, and in recognition of our duty of candor to the court and our responsibilities to the American people, the FBI is committed to working with the court and DOJ to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the FISA process,” he added.

Wray said in his letter to FISC, the secret court that handles national security investigations, that he has ordered more than 40 corrective actions, 12 of which are specific to the FISA surveillance application process, to ensure the bureau doesn’t

make the same mistakes again.

They include a new verification form to certify the accuracy of information from informants, a new checklist for agents to fill out when seeking FISA approval for surveillance to better inform the court of all relevant information, and new training to reemphasize the importance of accuracy and thoroughness in all FISA applications.

Wray ordered that the training program be created by April 30 and is requiring that all agents and lawyers who staff FISA complete it by June 30.

“I am determined that operational personnel understand, holistically, what occurred during the activities reflected in the [inspector general’s] report, and that, in addition, personnel working on FISA applications understand the importance of rigor during each and every phase of the application process,” he wrote.

His letter comes after a report released on Dec. 9 from the Justice Department inspector general found 17 serious “inaccuracies and omissions” in the FBI’s request to wiretap Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign volunteer Carter Page.

The report ordered the FBI to respond to its findings with a plan on how it will address the problems that had been identified.

President Trump, who has accused the FBI of launching an unwarranted probe into his campaign, responded to Wray’s letter to the courts on Twitter on Jan. 11, and appeared to signal that he wanted more than just an apology.

“FBI Director apologizes for FISA Errors (of which there were far too many to be a coincidence!). @FoxNews Chris, what about all of the lives that were ruined because of the so-called ‘errors?’ Are these ‘dirty cops’ going to pay a big price for the fraud they committed?” he wrote.

THE WORLD

In Pictures



(From top L-R) **A father and a son** look at the famous Viking-era Rök runestone near the town of Odeshog, Sweden, on Jan. 9. The five-tonne slab is now believed to have been erected by Vikings fearing a repeat of a previous cold climate crisis in Scandinavia, according to a new study. Raised in the 19th century, the stone bears the longest runic inscription in the world and makes reference to the “death of the sun nine generations ago.” **Residents look on as Taal Volcano** erupts in Talisay, Philippines, on Jan. 12. Local authorities evacuated residents as Taal began spewing ash up to a kilometer high. **Photos, such as this one** of plant regrowth after fire, have gone viral after devastating fires ripped through 10 million hectares of land on Australia’s east coast this bushfire season. According to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation, and Attractions, “Australian plants have adapted to persist in a fire prone environment. Most plants can re-shoot from protected buds on their stems or roots, so they can recover rapidly after a fire.” **Supporters of Taiwan’s President** Tsai Ing-wen from the ruling Democratic Progressive Party display a placard during a rally in Taipei on Jan. 10, ahead of the presidential elections. **A volunteer wildlife carer** feeds an injured koala joey at the Kangaroo Island Wildlife Park on Jan. 8. Positioned on the edge of the fire zone, the park has been treating and housing close to 30 koala’s a day. **A Vietnamese woman** collects dried incense sticks at a courtyard in Quang Phu Cau village of Hanoi, Vietnam, on Jan. 9 ahead of the upcoming Lunar New Year celebrations. **Circular fields** seen in Wadi Al-Dawasi, the green oasis of Saudi Arabia, on Jan. 13.

JEFFREY GUSTASSON/TT NEWS AGENCY/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES; WILLIAM WEST/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES; JEFFREY GUSTASSON/TT NEWS AGENCY/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES; FRANCK FIE/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES; MANAN VASIS/ANNA/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES; FRANCK FIE/AP VIA GETTY IMAGES

OPINION

NAZANIN TABATABAEE/WANA VIA REUTERS



Iranians attend a funeral procession for Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani, head of the elite Quds Force, and Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, who were killed in an U.S. air strike at Baghdad airport, in Tehran, Iran, on Jan. 6, 2020.

The Impact of Soleimani’s Death

JIM MCKINNEY



The U.S. strike on Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani was one of the most significant events in the Middle East in nearly 70 years. The U.S. “Reaper” drone strike at the Baghdad Airport on Jan. 3 that killed Soleimani was precise, rapid, and without civilian casualties. Even though it has turned the region upside down in the short term, its strategic impact will undermine the Iranian regime in the long term.

Soleimani wasn’t the second-most powerful man in Iran; he was the most powerful individual in all of the Middle East. He directed the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps’ (IRGC) Quds Force, the Iranian special operations and intelligence force. The IRGC protects the Iranian theocracy; the Quds Force spreads its influence. Soleimani was the man who kept the religious rulers in power.

The Quds Force trained, funded, and directed Hezbollah, Houthi rebels in Yemen, numerous militias in Iraq, Syria, Sudan, and Libya, as well as Lebanese and Palestinian paramilitary formations. They have placed special forces, equipment, and human intelligence operatives throughout the world.

I believe Soleimani’s death will unify and inspire those who have feared Iranian influence and embolden dissatisfied Iranians who want peace and freedom.

Soleimani’s personality tied together this collage of terrorists. His mission was to expand Iranian influence and protect the Islamic Revolution through violence, using guns, threats, money, loyalty, and fear to achieve his goals. He was the architect for suppressing the recent civil uprisings in Iran, killing an estimated 1,500 protesters.

Soleimani wasn’t only the glue that kept the Iranian regime in power, he was also deeply involved in influencing

Iraq. He directly planned, coordinated, and executed numerous attacks on U.S. forces in Iraq between 2004 and 2011. His organization developed explosively formed penetrators and conducted thousands of improvised explosive device (IED) attacks that killed more than 500 Americans, hundreds of allies, and thousands of innocent civilians and regional governments’ security forces. He also approved the attack on the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad in December 2019.

Iraq and Iran have a bad history—an ugly war in the 1980s. Soleimani had forced Iraqi Shiite leaders to forsake their sovereignty to protect Iranian interests. And now that he’s dead, some Iraqi Shiite leaders are quietly relieved. Many Iraqi Sunni and Kurdish leaders are ecstatic, as are many in Iran who oppose the oppressive regime.

His complex network is now scrambling for leadership. The culture of the Middle East is based on loyalty to individuals—not just anyone can step in to fill Soleimani’s role; this strike was massively disruptive. His absence forces small, diverse interests to question each other, and potentially splinter. That will create fear, mistrust, and scare the Ayatollahs in Iran—their protector is gone.

Power matters in the Middle East. Soft negotiation shows weakness; hard negotiation gains respect. It’s the same for bargaining in the local markets as it is in politics.

President Donald Trump just told the Quds Force network, and the world, that the United States has the intelligence, the capability, and the will to strike the very top—at the most powerful men, anytime, anywhere—to protect U.S. interests and to achieve regional stability. I argue it was the most precise, and possibly the most influential, U.S. projection of power in the region ever.

No Western leader has had the courage to take such bold, independent, and risky action against an Iranian senior (terror) leader before. It will create some level of chaos in the short term. Retaliation is, of course, unpredictable—and dangerous. But it will certainly show that this U.S. administration won’t play the games of the past 40 years.

I believe Soleimani’s death will unify and inspire those who have feared

HOSSEIN VELAYATI/FARS NEWS AGENCY VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



General Qassem Soleimani (L), and Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in Tehran, Iran, on Nov. 5, 2017.

Iranian influence. Kurds, Iraqi Sunnis, Kuwaitis, Saudi Arabians, Lebanese Christians, Jordanians, Egyptians, Israelis, and others have already formed a coalition against Iran.

His death may embolden dissatisfied Iranians who want peace and freedom. Protests are already erupting over the lies the regime has told in recent days. The protesters are surely emboldened with Soleimani out of the picture.

Strategically, the strike is likely to lessen, rather than increase, attacks on U.S. interests out of fear of response. It might even force the Iranian authoritarians to negotiate out of fear for their survival.

Regardless of the unpredictable outcomes, the strike on Soleimani was a game-changer.

Lt. Col. James McKinney is a retired U.S. Army Foreign Area officer with more than 30 years of service in strategic, tactical, and special operations assignments around the globe. He served as a senior defense official and defense attaché, the deputy chief of combating terrorism for U.S. Pacific Command, the security assistance officer for U.S. embassies in Albania and the Republic of Georgia, and a political-military adviser to the commander of U.S. Army Central in the Middle East. He’s now a consultant, and serves on the board of Saturna Capital.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

The culture of the Middle East is based on loyalty to individuals—not just anyone can step in to fill Soleimani’s role; this strike was massively disruptive.

China, Russia, North Korea, Iran Form Anti-American Alliance

JAMES GORRIE



Commentary

In what is likely to be America’s biggest strategic challenge going forward, a new “Axis of Evil,” to borrow President George W. Bush’s terminology, has emerged on the world stage. China, Russia, North Korea and Iran, are working together to weaken the American-led world order.

A New Threat to the Post War World Order

This recent alignment of rogue nations poses a direct threat to all the strategic, trade, economic and cultural foundations that have anchored the world’s stability and development since the end of World War II. Consequently, the challenge before American diplomatic and strategic institutions, as well as military planners, has now become much more formidable.

That’s largely because, unlike other nations that may not share American or Western democratic values, morals and goals, these four nations are aggressive and actively engaged in wars of expansion, or leveraging the threat of war to do so.

This new fascist axis has become much more evident in the aftermath of the U.S. drone strike that killed the terrorist General Qassem Soleimani of Iran. In a move designed to counter enhanced U.S. response in the region, Chinese defense authorities announced that both China and Russia would be participating in upcoming naval military drills with the Iranian navy in the Indian ocean and the Gulf of Oman.

This isn’t a particularly surprising development, but it is nonetheless momentous, if not ominous. U.S. defense authorities have been aware of the emergence of Chinese-Russian collaboration for at least a couple of years, as the National Defense Summary of 2018 acknowledges:

“The central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition by what the National Security Strategy classifies as revisionist powers. It is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model—gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic, and security decisions.”

China and Russia Deepen Military Ties

China and Russia especially are becoming much closer, engaging in highly coordinated military drills, harmonizing command structures and even technology transfers. North Korea and Iran are also part of this unfortunate and dangerous collaboration. And yet, there are rational reasons for doing so.

All four nations are regional or global competitors with the United States. But each finds American military and economic power standing between them and their expansionist plans. In fact, all of them are subjected to the dollar-based international financial system controlled by Washington, D.C. and currently under harsh U.S. economic sanctions. The American-dominated financial system and technological and military supremacy has, to differing degrees, limited these nations’ ability to exercise greater regional or global hegemony.

Biting the Hand That Feeds

China in particular has benefitted from the very American-led system that it wishes to overthrow. It has seen its development skyrocket from a poor agrarian nation to the second largest economy in



Vessel lays pipe for the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea on Aug. 16, 2018. The Nord Stream 2 pipeline will transport Russian natural gas from Narva Bay in Russia to Greifswald in Germany, creating an additional, direct natural gas route between Russia and western Europe. The pipeline has faced opposition from many countries in eastern and central Europe, the United States and particularly Ukraine because it risks increasing Europe’s dependence on Russian natural gas.



Natural gas reservoirs under construction at the port of Sabetta in the Kara Sea shore line on the Yamal Peninsula in the Arctic circle on April 16, 2015.

the world and a leader in robotics, artificial intelligence and the bio sciences among other areas.

China’s rapid development came about precisely due to the United States granting China most favored nation status, allowing it into the World Trade Organization. That was followed by the United States and Western nations investing trillions in capital, factories and intellectual property to China over the following four decades.

Today, China is strategically exploiting its status as a global economic power to militarize the South China Sea and threaten Hong Kong and Taiwan. It is also intimidating its neighbors in an attempt to cast doubt on the U.S. defense guarantees in the region. Those efforts include leveraging North Korea’s nuclear missile capabilities.

Rogue North Korea Gains Status

Both North Korea and Iran are aggressive rogue states with distinct and destabilizing interests. North Korea has been a client state of China’s since 1950 with the outbreak of the Korean War, and is dependent upon China for food, fuel and other staples. It acts in concert with China’s interests to counter U.S. influence in the region.

In its bid for greater regional and global status, Pyongyang has used

All four of these nations are fascist police states, regardless of what they call themselves. Each has an appalling and depressingly long record of mistreating their people for decades and are ruled by singular, dictatorial tyrants-for-life with blood on their hands.

its nuclear missile capabilities, including test launching missiles toward Japan, in support of China’s planned ascendancy in the region, and by extension, its own as well. Threatening military action against South Korea and America as well, is also a part of that effort.

Iran Sponsors Terror and Radical Islam

Iran, on the other hand, is the world’s most active terrorist state. It has gained significant control over Iraq. With its proxy wars in Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, the rogue Islamic theocracy seeks regional and religious dominance in the Middle East. That includes kicking the United States out of the Middle East, wiping Israel off the map and eliminating Saudis’ control over Arabia. Iran enjoys Russia as a strategic partner and a supplier of arms and military defense systems.

In this new “revisionist” alliance, all but Iran have nuclear weapons and intercontinental delivery systems. Tehran, however, is certainly trying to join that club, thwarted only by the Trump administration. But the similarities in behavior and objectives goes well beyond the nuclear card.

A Gathering of Fascists

All four of these nations are fascist

police states, regardless of what they call themselves. Each has an appalling and depressingly long record of mistreating their people for decades and are ruled by singular, dictatorial tyrants-for-life with blood on their hands. The political leadership of each controls the factors of production in order to support their aggressive foreign policies and maintain control over the civilian population.

Alliance of Economic Failures

Notably, Russia, North Korea and Iran, are all economic failures. Russia and Iran rely on oil and natural gas for a majority of their export income. All of them but China lack industrial diversification, high-functioning domestic markets, transparent legal systems and currencies with any value.

China and Russia have the most to lose. Beijing is seeing its dreams of economic primacy collapse under U.S. tariffs. The Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) legitimacy is fading daily in the face of Hong Kong’s refusal to accept communist rule.

And Russia’s hopes of controlling Western Europe through its monopoly on natural gas sales are all but over. A recent deal signed by Israel, Cyprus and Greece will provide more natural gas at less cost to Europe without the risk of being bullied by Moscow.

All four societies are also retrograde and evil, and seek to impose their dystopian visions upon the rest of the world. This new development doesn’t bode well for the United States or the civilized nations. The historical record of powerful fascist nations teaming up against the democracies of the world is not a pleasant one. (See Germany, Japan and Italy, circa 1939.)

It would appear that this new decade promises more challenges to the world and even less stability than the last.

James Gorrie is a writer and speaker based in Southern California. He is the author of “The China Crisis.”

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

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Standing outside of political interests and the pursuit of profit, our starting point and our goal is to create a media for the public benefit, to be truly responsible to society.

We endeavor to educate readers about today’s most important topics, seeking to broaden and uplift minds. We believe that rational, balanced debate is key for fostering a healthy democracy and a compassionate society.

As an independent media outlet, we use our freedom to investigate issues overlooked—or avoided—by other media outlets. We seek to highlight solutions and what’s good in society rather than what divides us.

We report respectfully, compassionately, and rigorously.

We stand against the destruction wrought by communism, including the harm done to cultures around the world.

We are inspired in this by our own experience. The Epoch Times was founded in 2000 to bring honest and uncensored news to people oppressed by the lies and violence in communist China.

We still believe journalism is a noble vocation, but only when it genuinely seeks to serve its communities and help them to flourish. In all that we do, we will hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity. This is our promise to you.

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SPECIAL SERIES

How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World

How Communism Sows Chaos in Politics

The Epoch Times here serializes a translation from the Chinese of “How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World,” a new book by the editorial team of the “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party.”

Chapter Eight (Cont.)

5. Totalitarianism: The Consequence of Communist Politics (cont.)

c. Excessive Laws Pave the Way for Totalitarianism

Totalitarian politics undermines the freedom of individuals to exercise compassion and gives space for evil. People seeking to use the law to stop others from doing wrong is precisely what the devil wants. In modern society, there are numerous complicated laws and regulations. The United States has more than 70,000 tax laws; the health insurance law amounts to over 20,000 pages. Even judges and lawyers can’t comprehend all the laws, not to mention an average person. From the federal level down to the state, county, and city, 40,000 new laws are passed every year, on average. A person can break a law without even realizing it. Punishments range from fines to imprisonment.

There are regulations on what kind of fish hook one can use and on slurping soup too noisily in public—everything, just about, has a law or rule limiting it. California allows only flat-screen televisions that meet certain energy-consumption requirements; plastic bags are banned. In some cities, building a hut in one’s backyard requires government approval.

The overutilization of laws dulls the moral sense. Many laws, in fact, go against common-sense morality. And yet the proliferation of laws has created the social trend in which people are judged by the law and not their moral standards. As time goes on, it is easy for the agents of the evil specter to implant the devil’s ideology into human laws.

However good the law is, it is only an external power, and cannot change people’s minds. Lao Tzu said, “The more laws are promulgated, the more thieves and bandits there will be.” The more laws there are, the more control big government can exert. People ignore the fact that social problems are caused by the devil magnifying the evil side of man. They think that the problem is in the law, so they set about fixing that, forgetting the crux of the matter. A vicious cycle is formed, and society begins its step-by-step march to autocracy.

d. Using Technology to Exert Control

Totalitarianism uses the state apparatus and secret police to monitor the population. Modern technology has pushed surveillance to the extreme, extending its gaze into every corner of life.

A report by Business Insider listed 10 ways the Chinese Communist Party has been monitoring the Chinese people.

1. Using facial recognition technology that can pick people out of massive crowds.
2. Getting group chat admins to spy on people.
3. Forcing citizens to download apps that allow the government to monitor their cell phone photos and videos.
4. Watching how people shop online.
5. Having law enforcement officers wear special glasses to identify people in crowded places, like streets and train stations.
6. Installing “robot police” in train stations to scan people’s faces and match those of wanted fugitives.
7. Using facial recognition technology to root out jaywalkers.
8. Stopping pedestrians at random to check their phones.
9. Tracking people’s social media posts, which can be linked to the user’s family and location.
10. Building predictive software to aggregate data about people—without their knowledge—and flag those they consider threatening.

The Financial Times draws out the sinister intent of China’s social credit score system. “This is at the heart of China’s 2020 plan: not just to use big data to measure a credit score, but to quantify the political leanings of its citizenry,” the article says. “The same system can be recalibrated to produce a ‘patriotism’ score, one that rates how closely an individual’s views are in line with the values of the

ruling Communist Party.”

With personnel files and big data, the government can have targeted citizens fired from their jobs and can have banks cancel their mortgages. It can revoke their licenses and ensure they can’t get hospital treatment.

Today’s China has the largest surveillance system in the world. In public places and on the roads, surveillance cameras are everywhere. In just minutes, faces on a blacklist can be pulled from a sea of 1.4 billion people. The surveillance software embedded in WeChat on cell phones enables open surveillance, and privacy is completely absent for anyone with a cell phone. There is simply nowhere to hide. As technology becomes more and more advanced and governments become bigger and bigger, a continuation on the path of socialism in the West would result in a similarly horrifying fate of being constantly monitored, pressured, and managed. This ultimate scenario is by no means an exaggeration.

6. Communism’s Total War Against the West

Due to the infiltration of the communist specter, American society today is divided to an unprecedented degree, with the Left using all its power to obstruct and thwart those who hold traditional views in politics. Using the term “war” to describe this situation is not an exaggeration in the least.

In recent years, during the election in America, although the rhetoric may have been fierce and confrontational, once the election was over, the healing would start, rifts would be mended, and politics would return to normalcy.

During the initial stage of the 2016 elections, however, some left-leaning officials within the government were already starting to plan how they would treat candidates from different parties with different standards. After the election, in order to seize back the election, the Left started a lawsuit. After the new president was inaugurated, the leftist governor of Washington state said that there was a “tornado of support” for all-out opposition to the new president. Higher-ups from the party in opposition admitted that an incensed army of liberals wanted them to wage “total war” [19] against the new president, to obstruct him everywhere, and through this, win public support.

The Left is currently resorting to all methods to achieve its goals. Leftists often oppose new policies merely for the sake of opposition. Under normal circumstances, different parties may hold different views on policies, but despite the division, they all have a common desire for the country to be safe. But remarkably, not only was the proposal to strengthen the border subject to intense attack, but certain states even passed “sanctuary city” laws. These laws prevent federal law enforcement officials from asking people about their immigration status, and prohibit local agencies from providing immigration-related information to federal law enforcement.

Before the election, the Left-dominated mainstream media heavily endorsed the candidate for the left-wing party, giving the impression that her victory was an inevitability—and thus many were dumbfounded by the result. After the election, mainstream media coordinated with leftist politicians to sensationalize all manner of issues, directing the public’s attention to attacks and criticisms of the new president, even to the extent of manufacturing fake news to confuse the public. The mainstream media turned a blind eye to virtually all of the new president’s achievements, while not delving too deeply into the enormous problems inherent in the left-wing nominee.

In a normal society, different groups or parties may have different opinions, and conflicts arise. But such conflicts ought to be temporary and localized, and eventually both sides should try to resolve the problem peacefully. It’s only when one group is possessed by the class-struggle mentality of the communist specter that political disputes get elevated to waging war, with the belief that cooperation or peaceful reconciliation is impossible and that one must

totally defeat the opponent and completely demolish the existing system.

This comprehensive warfare is reflected in the overall confrontation in political gamesmanship, policy formulation, and the battle for public opinion, bringing with it deep social ruptures and an increasing number of extremist and violent acts. This is exactly what the communist specter hopes to see.

In 2016, according to the latest poll conducted by The Associated Press and the Center for Public Affairs Research, about 85 percent of respondents believe that the country is more deeply divided on politics than in the past; 80 percent believe that Americans are heavily divided on important values.

The unity of a country requires a common set of values and a shared culture. Although the doctrines of different religions are different, the standards for good and evil are similar. This allows ethnic groups in the United States to live in harmony. However, when values are divided, whether the country will even hang together becomes a question.

Conclusion

Everyone harbors personal weaknesses and evil inside of them. The pursuit of power, wealth, and fame have existed since the dawn of mankind. The devil purposefully used the evil in human nature to create a system of its “agents” in each country. A country is like the human body, and each entity within it—whether an enterprise, government, and the like—is like a human organ. Each has its own function and performs its duties. If the devil’s agents infiltrate a country, then it’s as though a foreign consciousness has replaced the human soul—or in other words, that the foreign consciousness is directly controlling the body.

If someone tries to shake a society awake from the devil’s control, this system is likely to resist by every means—for example, by using the media to discredit opponents, engaging in personal attacks, using misleading information to confuse the public, orchestrating antagonism, ignoring government decrees, diverting resources to support the opposition, and dragging the entire society into division and conflict. Opponents have even caused social unrest while attempting to turn uninformed members of the public against those who dare to confront the devil. Many people are both the founders, and at the same time the victims, of this system. Although they may have done bad things, they’re not really enemies of mankind.

Through control of both state and private power, and unmatched access and ability to marshal economic resources and intervene domestically and around the world as desired, political power can be used to create achievements for the benefit of all people. On the other hand, the misuse of political power can lead to enormous crimes. The purpose of this chapter has been to reveal the communist factors behind the politics of the world today, and thus to help people distinguish between good and evil, to see the devil’s schemes, and to return politics to its proper domain and right path.

Former U.S. President Reagan once said: “From time to time we’ve been tempted to believe that society has become too complex to be managed by self-rule, that government by an elite group is superior to government for, by, and of the people. Well, if no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else?” Similarly, President Donald Trump said, “In America, we don’t worship government, we worship God.

Political authority needs to return to the right path, based on traditional values. Only when mankind is blessed by God will he be able to resist being manipulated by the devil, and thus avoid the path of enslavement and destruction. Only by returning to the traditions and virtues for man laid down by God will humankind have a way out.

This concludes Chapter Eight.

See next edition for the next installment.

‘One Child Nation’ Dispels Myths Glorifying Communism

NICOLE RUSSELL

Commentary
A new survey released by the Washington, D.C. nonprofit Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation shows that more Millennials approve of communism than ever.

According to YouGov, which conducted the poll, 36 percent of Millennials say they’re fine with communism, up from 28 percent in 2018. Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation has conducted the survey for several years, and the numbers appear to look more grim each year.

This is disturbing in many ways, and it’s clear this belief is due to ignorance, plain and simple.

Communist regimes are inherently abusive, dangerous, and create toxic environments citizens are forced to endure or face punishment. Older generations recognize this, often because they have seen the results firsthand—in the former Soviet Union, eastern Europe, Cuba, China, and North Korea. If Millennials realized what communism does to a society, I think they’d be less likely to approve of or applaud it.

A new documentary on Amazon Prime may help educate young people on the ills of communism. “One Child Nation,” by Chinese-born filmmakers Nanfu Wang and Jialing Zhang, was the 2019 Sundance U.S. Grand Jury Prize-winning documentary.

As Amazon says, the documentary exposes “the devastating consequences of China’s One-Child policy through the stories of those who lived it.”

I’m a Millennial, and though I’d certainly heard of China’s “One-Child Policy” and believed it

I’d ask Millennials who keep saying, in increasing numbers every year, that they approve of communist ideas to watch “One Child-Nation” and see if they feel the same way afterward.

A grandmother carries her grandson in the village of Gang-zhong in China’s eastern Zhejiang province on Nov. 19, 2013. Days earlier, China’s ruling party leadership decided to relax the controversial one-child policy.



PETER PARKS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Chinese-born filmmaker Nanfu Wang (2nd R) attends the “One Child Nation” Premiere during the 2019 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, on Jan. 26, 2019.

sounded ghoulish, I didn’t know many details. The policy was implemented by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) officials in 1979 as a so-called solution to overpopulation and the threat of famine. Citizens who had more than one child incurred severe penalties. In 2015, the CCP implemented a Two-Child Policy. However, decades of the One-Child Policy had made their mark, and the documentary shows the horrors of what communism does to people.

The documentary follows Wang, now living in the United States, as she returns to her native China to ask her friends and family about what it was like to live under the One-Child Policy. Wang finds many who admit it was hard to implement, but local officials did so out of fear.

At first, the effects of the policy seem somewhat benign, but as the documentary continues, it becomes clear the One-Child Policy took over the lives of men, women, and babies to their detriment.

We meet one woman, a midwife, who helped women pregnant with their second child abort their babies. She sterilized women as well to prevent second pregnancies. The midwife didn’t know how many babies she’d delivered alive, but she did know she’d done between 50,000 and 60,000 sterilizations and abortions, inducing the babies and often killing them after they were born. She said she kept track because she felt guilty. Now, she only helps treat people struggling with infertility, as a way to atone for her sins, she says with a resolute sadness.

It’s clear the number of abortions she’s performed, in direct compliance with the policy, is a source of pain and regret.

Like many communist countries, propaganda plays a significant role in implementing particularly egregious policies like this one. Wang shows dozens of still shots and plenty of footage showing slogans praising the One-Child Policy that were splashed across the country.

“We are fighting a population war” was one such popular mantra the CCP used to explain the reasoning behind the policy.

In reality, Wang says, “they were really fighting a war against their own people.” The policy continued, and although some of the population accepted it, others found it disturbing and tried to shed light on how awful it was for families, babies, and society as a whole.

The final third of Wang’s documentary focuses solely on the common, but little-known, practice of abandoning unwanted second babies in ditches, on the side of the road, and in landfills. The photographer Peng Wang painted depictions of an abandoned baby he noticed in a photo he took of what he thought was just trash.

Through his paintings, Peng Wang began to spread awareness of how dehumanizing the One-Child Policy was and how the CCP drove this agenda through their ideas.

“As a human being it takes guts to kill someone. How could they do this? It all comes from long-term indoctrination,” Peng Wang said. “For example, ‘Collective interests above all else.’ ‘The party is infallible.’”

The large numbers of abandoned babies created a market for human traffickers, and soon people began to sell babies they found to local orphanages, which in turn sold them to others, looking to adopt. While this might appear somewhat charitable, a way to turn a bad situation into something redeemable, the orphanages

told the potential adoptive parents the babies were truly orphans when, in fact, they had parents in China who simply couldn’t keep them because of the policy.

Communism, and by extension, the CCP’s One-Child Policy, worked to destroy the people’s humanity, their individual rights and freedoms, and any moral conscience.

Even though the policy has not been in effect since 2015, China is now facing a different crisis: There aren’t enough young people to take care of the aged. This is to say nothing of the irreparable emotional scars left behind on couples who felt forced to abort their baby or face punishment, women who abandoned their babies, and orphanages that participated in human trafficking, to profit off the residue of communist policies.

Millennials might think communism sounds cool, but it’s only because they haven’t been told or still don’t yet understand the devastating effects of communist policies on dehumanizing people and eradicating individual liberties, and in doing so, forever scarring the moral psyche of entire generations of people.

I’d ask Millennials who keep saying, in increasing numbers every year, that they approve of communist ideas to watch “One Child-Nation” and see if they feel the same way afterward.

Nicole Russell is a freelance writer and mother of four. Her work has appeared in *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Politico*, *The Daily Beast*, and *The Federalist*. Follow her on Twitter @russell_nm.

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Epoch Times*.



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Easter Island: Land of Those Mysterious Stone Giants

Understanding why the inhabitants of this tiny remote island built these mysterious giant stone statues is one thing—how is quite another.

See B4

FRED J. ECKERT



PARENTING

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See B8

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It is the combination of new cells and new learning that creates this magic.

Brain Regeneration

Why It's Real and How to Do It

Once considered impossible, brain recovery is now a well-studied phenomenon

The term neuroplasticity refers to the ability of the brain to 'rewire' itself through the practice of the desired skill.

SAYER JI

Have you ever wished you could regenerate those brain cells you sacrificed in college? Do you fear that your aging brain is in a perpetual state of decline? Medical science is being rewritten to show that we can repair our brain and it's something anyone can do. It's a commonly held misconception that the brain is beyond repair. Even the medical establishment has asserted that once we kill brain cells, they are gone forever. The fact is, the brain can repair itself, and as science is now proving, there is a real benefit to simple practices that can help keep our brains sharp and elastic throughout our lifetime.

Rewriting the Story of Brain Health The field of cognitive neuroscience is relatively new—only

around 100 years old—so it's no surprise that we are constantly arriving at a newer and better understanding of how the neural circuitry of the human brain supports overall brain functioning. For most of those 100 years, it was believed that once damaged, the brain couldn't regenerate. Brain cells were finite, and any loss or injury would be suffered as a deficiency for the rest of that person's life. This created a false belief that the brain is essentially in a perpetual state of decline. Although compelling evidence to the contrary was presented as early as 1960, the medical dogma was (and is) slow to change. It wasn't until the 1980s when Fernando Nottebohm's research at Rockefeller University clearly indicated that neurogenesis—production of new nerve cells, aka neurons—was taking

place in the adult vertebrate brain. The next big step in this scientific evolution would take more than 30 years. However, the pace of our understanding of how the brain is wired was about to take a quantum leap. Our Elastic Brain The growth of new neurons in an adult, mammalian brain was first seen in 1992, when scientists isolated neural stem cells from mice in a Petri dish. This regeneration was then replicated thousands of times in a variety of published studies over the next 25 years. It's now accepted in the medical scientific community that the adult brain is capable of growing new neurons and glial cells, something previously disbelieved by the medical establishment. Continued on B2

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Brain Regeneration

Why It's Real and How to Do It

Once considered impossible, brain recovery is now a well-studied phenomenon

Continued from B1

The brain is now considered to be resilient, pliable—plastic.

The term neuroplasticity refers to the ability of the brain to “rewire” itself through the practice of the desired skill. It’s the combination of new cells and new learning that creates this magic. When fresh nerve cells are well-stimulated (i.e., trained through specific learning exercises), they make new connections. In other words, they become healthy brain cells that contribute to learning and the development of new skills.

Just like the muscles of the body, when the brain is well-nourished and stimulated through proper exercise, it heals and grows. And with proper care and feeding, this amazing brain regeneration can occur throughout life.

To help make this a “no-brainer,” GreenMedInfo has compiled a simple list of ways you can safeguard brain health, stimulate new brain cell growth, and even heal the brain.

The brain is now considered to be resilient, pliable—plastic.

Get Lots of Physical Exercise

When you hear the phrase “train your brain,” you probably don’t think of lifting weights. Turns out, physical exercise is one of the best things you can do for your body and your brain.

The brain benefits of exercise are two-fold. First, the brain is a voracious consumer of glucose and oxygen, with no ability to store excess for later use. A continual supply of these nutrients is needed to maintain optimal functioning.

Physical exercise increases the blood flow to the brain, delivering a boost of fresh oxygen and glucose to hungry brain cells. A 2014 study showed that just 30 min-

utes of moderate cardio was enough to boost cognitive functioning in adult brains of all ages.

But the benefits don’t stop there. Exercise is believed to stimulate hippocampal neurogenesis: new cell growth in the region of the brain associated with long-term memory and emotions. Healthy cell growth in this region is important to the aging brain and believed to help prevent cognitive decline associated with Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.

Use Stress Reduction Techniques

Our modern world runs on stress, so the need to unwind is easy to understand. What you might not be aware of, is just how damaging continual immersion in the fight-or-flight hormones of stress can be to your brain.

Stress is one of the top factors in age-related cognitive decline. This makes engaging in regularly scheduled leisure activities not just a fun thing to do, but an important step toward ensuring optimal brain health.

You don’t need to look far to find ways to de-stress. Let your interests guide you. The key to picking brain-healthy pastimes is to avoid passive activities such as watching TV and instead choose stimulating hobbies that engage the brain through patterns, puzzles, and problem-solving.

A 2011 study published in the Journal of Neuropsychiatry found that activities such as playing games, reading books, and crafts like quilting and knitting reduced rates of cognitive impairment by up to 50 percent.

Engaging with art also ranks high on the list of brain-healthy hobbies. Studies prove that once again, it isn’t enough to be a passive observer. To get the brain boost, we must engage.

In a German study reported in the journal PLOS One, researchers studied two groups: a group that observed art, and a group that produced art. The study concluded that compared to those who observed

The key to picking brain-healthy pastimes is to avoid passive activities such as watching TV.

art, the art producers demonstrated increased interactivity between the frontal and parietal cortices of the brain. This increased brain connectivity translates to enhanced psychological resilience in the group of art producers. In other words, their ability to resist the negative effects of stress improved.

Looking for a more low-key way to unwind? How about playing beautiful music or sitting in quiet contemplation? Meditation has been shown to lower blood pressure, reduce inflammation, and even build resistance to feelings of anxiety and depression. And while listening to music may seem like a passive activity, research suggests that the act of listening to musical patterns facilitates brain neurogenesis.

Both meditation and listening to music affect the secretion of key hormones that enhance brain plasticity, thus changing the very way we respond to stress. Talk about good medicine!

Take Strategic Supplements

Turmeric

You probably know at least one person who raves about the health benefits of turmeric. This deep-orange root has been used as a panacea for everything from soothing joint pain and calming inflammation, to lowering the risk of heart disease. And our awareness of the benefits of this ancient medicinal herb continues to grow.

Turmeric is an example of a remyelinating compound, which denotes a substance with proven nerve-regenerative effects.

Remyelinating compounds work to repair the protective sheath around the nerve bundle known as myelin, an area often damaged in autoimmune and vaccine-induced disorders. Research shows that even small doses of these restorative substances can produce significant nerve regeneration.

The Western model of pharmaceutical intervention has created a culture that seeks to identify and isolate the “active ingredient” of an organic substance. What this fails to account for is that organic compounds often work in concert: isolates by themselves may lack a critical key that another plant element provides.

Curcumin is the isolated active ingredient in turmeric, however, new research shows that another element found in turmeric has magical properties of its own.

In an exciting study published in the journal Stem Cell Research & Therapy, re-



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searchers found that a little-known component within turmeric, Ar-turmerone, may make “a promising candidate to support regeneration in neurologic disease.”

The study found that when brain cells were exposed to ar-turmerone, neural stem cells increased in number and complexity, indicating a healing effect was taking place. This effect was replicated in rats, who when exposed to ar-turmerone saw increased neural stem cell production and the generation of healthy new brain cells.

Green Tea

A 2014 paper studying the active compounds in green tea (known as catechins, a main class of micronutrient), determined that green tea catechins aren’t only antioxidant and neuroprotective, they actually stimulate the brain to produce more neurons.

Because of this therapeutic effect on damaged regions of the brain, green tea has been shown to have exciting implications in the treatment of “incurable” neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, and Huntington’s disease. This prompted researchers to declare green tea catechins “a highly useful complementary approach” in the treatment of neurodegenerative diseases.

Further investigation of green tea examined a combination of blueberry, green tea, and carnosine, and found it to promote the growth of new neurons and brain stem cells, in an animal model of neurodegenerative disease.

Ginkgo Biloba

Ginkgo biloba is consid-

Just 30 minutes of moderate cardio was enough to boost cognitive functioning in adult brains of all ages.

ered a powerhouse in the herbal medicine pharmacopeia, and its implications for brain health are equally potent. Ginkgo has demonstrated at least 50 distinct health benefits, and its medicinal value is documented in the treatment of more than 100 different diseases.

There are numerous studies on ginkgo’s ability to stimulate levels of a critical brain protein called BDNF: brain-derived neurotrophic factor. This protein affects healing in damaged regions of the brain and is essential in the regulation, growth, and survival of brain cells, making it especially important for long-term memory.

Ginkgo is so effective that a 2006 paper published in the European Journal of Neurology found it to be as useful in the treatment of Alzheimer’s disease as the blockbuster drug Donepezil.

Recently, a new mechanism behind ginkgo biloba’s brain healing properties came to light with the publication of an article in Cell and Molecular Neurobiology. Researchers determined that ginkgo is effective, in part, due to its ability to modulate neural stem cells (NSCs) into the type of cell that is necessary for the specific region of the brain where the BDNF proteins are active.

NSC’s are multipotent cells; they have the amazing ability to shape-shift into any of the many different phenotypes of cells that make up the brain. Ginkgo stimulates the growth of the right cell phenotype for the affected region of the brain, giving our brain exactly what’s needed, where it’s needed. Now that’s intelligent medicine!

Eat Your Veggies

Want to stimulate brain cell regrowth while you’re having lunch? Add some freshly steamed broccoli to your plate!

Science has added a substance called sulforaphane, found in sulfur-rich vegetables such as broccoli, to the growing list of neurotogenic substances that have been documented to stimulate nerve growth in the brain.

The study, published in the journal Genesis, reveals that sulforaphane, in addition to stimulating new nerve growth, has demonstrated significant healing properties as an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent, as well as preventing disease and death of healthy neurons.

Adding to the excitement surrounding these findings, researchers observed the beneficial effect on neural stem cells that results in their differentiation to specific, useful types of neurons, lending powerful support to the hypothesis that sulforaphane stimulates brain repair.

Vegetables containing sulforaphane include broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, horseradish, kale, kohlrabi, mustard leaves, radish, turnips, watercress, and bok choy. For therapeutic benefit, try to consume at least 3 cups per day, raw or cooked.

Employ Continuous Learning

Aging is often associated with cognitive decline, both in research and anecdotal evidence. However, a growing body of literature shows that retaining a sharp, lucid brain means never retiring our critical thinking skills.

The need to continually

challenge and expand our thinking was demonstrated in the aforementioned 2011 study published in the Journal of Neuropsychiatry. In this study, the leisure time activities of a group of older adults (ages 70 to 89) were monitored for effect on mild cognitive impairment (MCI).

The study determined that the level of complexity of the activity was key to its effectiveness at preventing MCI. Working with computers, reading books, and activities associated with patterns and problem-solving contributed to a significant decrease in the odds of developing MCI. Less stimulating activities showed no statistical effect. This stresses the importance of feeling challenged and stimulated by the activities we pursue as we age.

These findings were reinforced by a 2014 study of nearly 3,000 volunteers, spanning more than a decade. This study examined the potential long-term benefit of cognitive training in older adults. Results showed that participants demonstrated enhanced brain processing speed and reasoning skills for up to 10 years after the training was completed.

Just like the muscles of the body, when the brain is well-nourished and stimulated through proper exercise, it heals and grows.

These tangible brain benefits spilled over into daily life and were measured in the participant’s ability to complete normal daily tasks, such as personal finances, meal preparation, and personal care routines. The study revealed that stimulating environments help increase the complexity of the brain.

For more information on ways to keep your brain healthy, visit GreenMed-Info’s brain health research database online.

Sayer Ji is the founder of Greenmedinfo.com, a reviewer at the International Journal of Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine, co-founder and CEO of Systome Biomed, vice chairman of the board of the National Health Federation, and a steering committee member of the Global GMO Free Coalition.





The Ahu Vai Uri construction dates from 1200 AD, and its five restored moai are a sample of the different carving styles.

Easter Island: *Land of Those Mysterious Stone Giants*

FRED J. ECKERT

It's the land of those mysterious stone giants—that's pretty much all that I knew about Easter Island. That's practically all that most of us know about it—vague impressions of the arcane that we have formed from the photographic images that we have seen of those gigantic strange stone statues known as "moai."

It is a very different place from what I had expected.

"That's a pretty scene—isn't it? Those horses out in the field," remarked my guide Yan Araki, as we headed toward a spot called Ahu Akivi.

We were driving down a narrow road lined with stone wall borders and looking out at some splendid horses grazing on green-yellow fields among rolling hills.

"Do you like Rapa Nui?" asked Yan. That's what its Polynesian natives call this island that we call Easter Island. "Is it what you expected?"

I do like it—it greatly exceeded my expectations.

What I had expected was a very small, very remote, not particularly attractive island that happened to have these world-famous, colossal strange stone statues. I hadn't imagined that it would be such an engaging and magically pleasant place.

"Well, it is small," he said.

Approximately 64 square miles, it's only about 14 miles long and at no point more than seven miles wide.

"And it is remote."

The Most Remote Inhabited Island in the World

Easter Island is, in fact, the most remote inhabited island in the world. It sits in the South Pacific Ocean some 2,300 miles west of South America, 2,500 miles southeast of Tahiti, 4,300 miles south of Hawaii, and 3,700 miles north of Antarctica. The closest inhabited island is 1,260 miles away—tiny Pitcairn Island, the place where the mutineers of the H.M.S. Bounty settled.

Walking slowly along while looking up at the row of seven colossal moai at Ahu Akivi, I felt an elusive sense of solemnity and mystery.

Easter Island, which has been part of Chile since 1852, may be remote, but it's easy to get to from Chile and fairly easy even from other places as well via LATAM Airlines.

It's not just the green-yellow fields with attractive horses and stone boundary makers that make Easter Island different from the typical South Seas island. There is no coral reef surrounding the island—unusual for a South Pacific island—and there are only two small white sand beaches.

Its coastline is rocky and rugged—here, too, the scenes are more like something out of Ireland than the South Pacific.

A Lingering Sense of Solemnity and Mystery

But what makes Easter Island so special is not just what you see here—it's also how you feel here.

Walking slowly along while looking up at the row of seven colossal moai at Ahu Akivi, I felt an elusive sense of solemnity and mystery. It still lingers. It's the same sort of feeling one gets while visiting the revered sites of Jerusalem or a special place of worship or one of the great wonders of the world.

One of the largest "ahu" on the island—an ahu is the platform on which the moai (stone statues) sit—Ahu Akivi is an especially sacred place, his favorite, Yan Araki told me. Folk-



Anakena Beach at Anakena Bay is a favorite spot where locals and tourists alike relax. Ahu Nau Nau looks out across the island from here.

lore holds that its seven moai represent the seven young explorers that, according to a legend, the Polynesian King Hotu Matu'a dispatched from across the seas to find this new homeland for him and for his people.

These seven stone stature giants that I was looking up at may well symbolize those seven explorers, but no one knows for sure. Just as no one knows for certain what any of the moai really represent.

The generally accepted theory is that these majestic giant stone statues were built to honor Polynesian gods and deified ancestors such as chiefs and other figures important in the island's history. Most of them are attributed to the 14th and 15th centuries, although some were erected as long ago as the 10th century.

Their function, it is believed, was to look out over a village or gravesite as a protector. They may also have been status symbols for villages or clans.

They're gigantic. The seven before me at Ahu Akivi each stood about 16 feet high and weighed about 18 tons. The tallest moai on the island exceed 30 feet. Moai in the range of 12–20 feet are commonplace. The occasional tiny moai that you come across is at least six feet high.

The ahu of Easter Island vary in length—the longest one is 300 feet, while some that hold but one moai are only several feet long. Each ahu has a stone masonry base that slopes upward to a high terrace upon which the moai rest. Some terraces are as high as 15 feet above ground level. All of them are fairly wide—the base of the moai that stand upon them measure as much as ten feet long by eight or nine feet wide.

Easter Island statues overlaid on map of Easter Island.

ALL PHOTOS BY FRED J. ECKERT
KATSIARYNA
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How Did They Do It?

Understanding why the inhabitants of this tiny remote island built these mysterious giant stone statues is one thing—how is quite another.

Sure, they had tools—but only very primitive tools.

Sure, the island’s volcanic rock from which they were carved is softer and lighter than most other rock, but even the smallest moai weighs several tons. Some of the moai of Easter Island have been estimated to weigh as much as 80 to 90 tons.



▲ Rano Raraku, a volcano that was long ago turned into a factory for producing moai, invokes a sense of mystery stronger than any other place at Easter Island. It’s like walking in a huge graveyard of giant stone statues.

At no time was Easter Island ever inhabited by more than a few thousand people. Which raises this thought: It is one thing for a relatively small number of people to be able to carve these gigantic statues with woefully inadequate tools, but what about moving them? Many of the moai—there are hundreds of them—are erected at sites miles away from the quarry where they were carved, as many as 12 miles away. How could so few people have moved them even a few feet, let alone several miles? And how could they have done it without breaking them?

And once they did move them, how could they have erected them? Even today, using powerful cranes, it would be no simple task.

We marvel that the ancient Egyptians were able to build the pyramids using hundreds of thousands of slaves. But they merely built them—they didn’t create gigantic heavy structures and then move them for miles and then erect them.

“How do you think your ancestors moved the moai?” I asked Yan Araki.

Yan told me that even today many Rapa Nui still believe that the statues were moved and erected by “mana,” a magical force. Great kings of a long-gone era simply used their mana to command the moai to move to the distant sites and stand there.

Its coastline is rocky and rugged—here, too, the scenes are more like something out of Ireland than the South Pacific.

Mana is a word and concept that you come across frequently in South Seas lore. The Rapa Nui believed that the moai possessed mana, which was instilled at the time their white coral eyes were put in place, and that the moai used their mana to protect the people of the island. Today none of the moai have genuine coral eyes—and thus the mana is no more.

Other theories, Yan explained, include the intervention of extraterrestrials, sliding the moai along on layers of yams and sweet potatoes and the now generally accepted belief that they were transported on sledges or log rollers and then levered erect using piles of stones and long levers.

Thor Heyerdahl, whose books “The Kon-Tiki Expedition” and “Aku-Aku,” stirred great interest in Easter Island, conducted an experiment showing that an upright stone statue could be moved using ropes tilting and swiveling it along. But the experiment was conducted on a flat surface for only a short distance and this theory, like Heyerdahl’s theory that the islands of the South Pacific were settled from east to west from South America rather than from west to east from southeast Asia, isn’t considered plausible.

Never Far From a Giant Statue
All but a few of the moai of Easter Island—

there are hundreds of them; no matter where you are on the island, you are never far from one—were carved at Rano Raraku, a volcanic cone that contains a crater lake.

While cruise ship tours came and left, we lingered for a few hours here. It is an eerie spot. Scattered all around Rano Raraku are 394 moai in every stage of evolution. Some of them are fallen—fallen moai are a common sight around the island—and some appear to have only heads, although they are really full figures that have been nearly buried by accumulated dirt over the centuries. For reasons that remain a mystery, it appears that the workers at Rano Raraku set down their tools in the middle of a great multitude of projects—and the moai building abruptly ceased.

But people will never cease to be mystified and enchanted by Easter Island. Its multitude of moai, while far and away the main reason to visit, and more than sufficient reason, to visit, isn’t its only appeal.

We visited interesting caves decorated with old paintings, stopped by a pineapple farm for a fresh fruit treat, watched locals fish from cliffs. We shopped for souvenirs in Hanga Roa, a sprawling and pleasant community where all the island’s 2,775 residents live because it’s the only area on the island with electricity and running water, visited the beach—and, of course, we saw lots and lots more moai. A few of those other moai were adorned with a “pukao,” a red scoria cylinder atop the head that looks like a hat but which, Yan explained, is believed to represent a native hairstyle from long ago.

We also went to Orongo, a restored ceremonial village perched on the rim of a crater overlooking a fantastic coastal view and famous for its hundreds of petroglyphs; there are 1,785 of these image carvings on the rocks of Orongo.

While traveling from sight to sight, Yan Araki entertained and informed me with tales about the island’s history. He told me all about its long-ago birdman cult. About the mid-19th century, Peruvian slave trade raids nearly stripped the island of its population. And about the wars that once raged on the island between the long-ears (the ruling noble clans who had their ear lobes elongated) and the short-ears; it resulted in the triumph of the short ears and the destruction and neglect of so many of the moai.

Yan knew that I have roamed all over this wide world and asked me questions about different destinations that he thought might be interesting.

“You have probably seen many places that are a lot more interesting than this,” he said, as we took in the sights of Easter Island.

Not very many.

Fred J. Eckert is a retired U.S. ambassador and former member of Congress. His writings have appeared in many leading publications, including Reader’s Digest and The Wall Street Journal. He is also an award-winning photographer whose collection of images spans all seven continents.

IF YOU GO

Information: Check out Easter Island Tourism: EasterIslandTourism.com/

Best time to go: Given its generally fine weather, any month is good, but the best times to visit are either April to June or October to December, when the climate is even more temperate and prices more affordable.

Tour operators: There are plenty. Here’s a sampling: TourRadar.com/g/v-Islands-Easter-Island-Tour-Operators

Safety: Chile, to which Easter Island belongs, has recently experienced troubles, unusual for that generally stable country, so check current news if you plan on staying over in Chile. I once got pulled over by a police car on Easter Island. Three officers emerged. They said they had noticed me traveling around the island and asked if there was any way they might be of help in making my visit better! When I asked for their opinions on a couple of restaurants, they insisted on my letting them lead the way to the one I decided on.

Travel tip for peace of mind: If you ever had to be medically evacuated while traveling, it could cost you tens of thousands of dollars. Many plans that claim they cover this fall far short. My wife and I cover ourselves against this with membership in MedjetAssist. MedjetAssist.com or 800-527-7478.

Suggestions: Try to gain an insight into Easter Island by reading at least one good guide book before you visit. It’ll greatly enhance your experience. Also, you will see flyers promoting cultural shows held in the island’s only town, Hanga Roa, whose 5,000 or so residents account for 90 percent of the island’s population. The one I attended was a well-done Polynesian performance of song and dance.

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A man walks past the Royal Cemeteries of Meroe Pyramids in Begrawiya at River Nile State on Nov. 10, 2019.



Creeping desert sands surround the Royal Cemeteries of Meroe Pyramids in Begrawiya at River Nile State on Nov. 10, 2019.

Sudan Looks to Pyramids to Attract Tourism and Hard Currency

MEROE, Sudan—Portuguese architect Tania Monteiro and her husband are almost alone as they tour Sudan’s pyramids, a world-class attraction long neglected by the world.

“People are really, really nice, always very welcoming,” Monteiro said on a recent visit to Meroe, an ancient city on the east bank of the River Nile about 125 miles northeast of the capital Khartoum.

Sudan has more—though smaller—pyramids than Egypt, but attracted only about 700,000 tourists in 2018 compared to some 10 million in its northern neighbor.

Conflicts and crises under veteran ruler Omar al-Bashir, a tough visa regime, and a lack of roads and decent hotels outside Khartoum have made Sudan an unlikely tourist destination.

But Bashir lost power in April, and the new civilian transition government is easing visa rules to attract more visitors with their

hard currency to places such as the Royal Pyramids of Meroe. A film crew was shooting a promotional video for a travel agency in Khartoum.

Like the Egyptians, the Nubian Kush dynasty that ruled in the area some 2,500 years ago buried members of the royal family in pyramid tombs.

Near Meroe’s pyramids lie an array of temples with ancient drawings of animals and the ancient city of Naga, and there are more pyramids further north at Jebel Barka.

Rise in Tourist Numbers

The new government has already started relaxing the visa system, including dropping a permit required for travel outside Khartoum, said Graham Abdel-Qadir, undersecretary of the ministry of information, culture, and tourism.

“There has been already a rise of tourists in October and November thanks to the new system,” he told Reuters.

Arrivals fell this year because of unrest but num-

bers are expected to exceed 900,000 next year and might reach up to 1.2 million in 2021, he said.

Sudan needs tourists after decades of isolation and hyperinflation. This week the pound fell on the black market to 81 per dollar. The official rate is 45.

At Meroe, thanks to money from Qatar and German expertise, a visitor’s center has been set up explaining the history of Sudan and the pyramids. There are walking tracks and a new reception center. Visitors can for the first time enter the pyramids’ interior and will soon be able to go into tombs underneath, part of Qatar’s \$135 million aid. Several pyramids will be restored after decades of neglect.

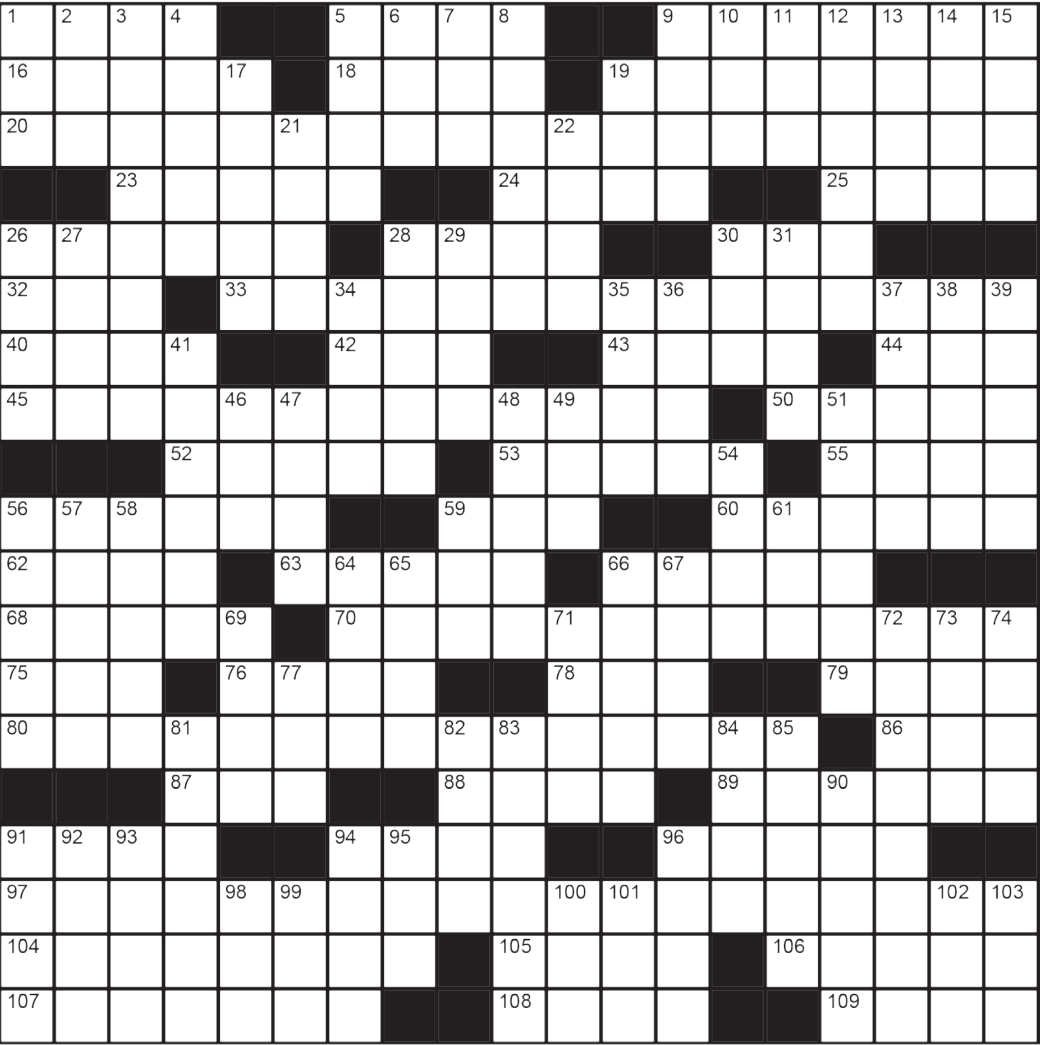
Sudanese tourists are also coming. “We had three buses [of Sudanese alone] yesterday,” said Mahmoud Suleiman, head of the site.

By Ulf Laessing & El Tayyeb Siddig From Reuters

* Use American spelling to enjoy these puzzles made by our parent company in New York.

CROSSWORD

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF



Across

- 1. Neighbor of Libya
- 5. Active one
- 9. Banister
- 16. Was laid up
- 18. Double-reed instrument
- 19. USMC geographic focus area
- 20. Mirror for the stars?
- 23. Reduces to bits
- 24. Good shot
- 25. Midleg
- 26. Kind of salad
- 28. Wish receiver
- 30. Luau food
- 32. Germany's Dortmund-___ Canal

- 33. Be opportunistic, perhaps
- 40. Treaty
- 42. Rumania's 100 bani
- 43. Detent
- 44. Tell a whopper
- 45. Many guitars have one
- 50. Last letter
- 52. Put an end to
- 53. Physical therapy
- 55. Palace resident
- 56. Amateur golfer
- 59. Away
- 60. Without breaking a sweat
- 62. Natural soother
- 63. Asian breads
- 66. Colorists

- 68. Sky sight
- 70. Point to another passage
- 75. Dusk, to Donne
- 76. Frolic
- 78. Cheerios grain
- 79. Bristle
- 80. A punch in the mouth
- 86. Excel command
- 87. Nile reptile
- 88. Reaction to bad news
- 89. Capitol of Texas
- 91. Nobody
- 94. Skirt feature
- 96. Like Hungarian
- 97. 14.7 psi at sea level
- 104. Adapted
- 105. Top choice, slangly

- 106. Divination deck
- 107. They're left behind
- 108. "A place you can go ... when you're short on your dough," in a 1979 hit
- 109. Poland's Walesa

Down

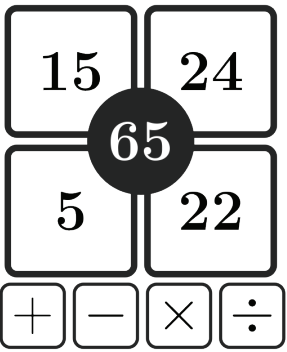
- 1. Caboose, e.g.
- 2. Get going
- 3. In the open air
- 4. Bagel purveyors
- 5. Specks
- 6. Kyoto cummerbund
- 7. 1 billion years, in astronomy
- 8. Caribbean music
- 9. Lunar trench
- 10. Tucked away
- 11. "___ now or never!"
- 12. Commit unalterably
- 13. Chipping choice
- 14. A mullet covers it
- 15. Hilarity
- 17. Coffee order
- 19. Meadow
- 21. Area of a bird's beak
- 22. 1 mmHg pressure
- 26. Ingredient in porcino mushroom soup
- 27. Asian nurse
- 28. About 1.3 cubic yards
- 29. Conclusion starter
- 30. Nave bench
- 31. Capital near the 60th parallel
- 34. Stout relatives
- 35. Colorful fish
- 36. Wine area
- 37. 1985 Kate Nelligan title role
- 38. Seal
- 39. Like some goodbyes
- 41. "Old Dan ___" (camp-fire song)

- 46. "Malcolm X" director
- 47. "Phooey!"
- 48. Bridge support
- 49. Abbr. after a former military leader's name
- 51. Letter abbr.
- 54. Bone to pick
- 56. Czech diacritical
- 57. Extraterrestrial
- 58. Latin horn
- 59. "... sail ___ Ship of State"
- 61. Live and breathe
- 64. "God's Little ___" (Caldwell novel)
- 65. Synagogue chests
- 66. Chosen at random
- 67. "Abominable" one
- 69. Varieties
- 71. "Fizzical" relief
- 72. Spa treatment
- 73. Case for a seamstress
- 74. Angry outburst
- 77. Swiss peak
- 81. Oil source
- 82. "Abdul Abulbul ___"
- 83. Advise
- 84. Parakeet's pad
- 85. A wood or grove
- 90. Kind of rope
- 91. Spread
- 92. Calculations made while high, for short?
- 93. Pass over
- 94. "___ Leaving Home" (The Beatles)
- 95. "One Kiss ___ to Another" Coasters
- 96. Fertilizer ingredient
- 98. W. C. Fields persona
- 99. "Ante" relative
- 100. Engine part
- 101. Common pipe material, briefly
- 102. Big bird
- 103. Numerical suffix

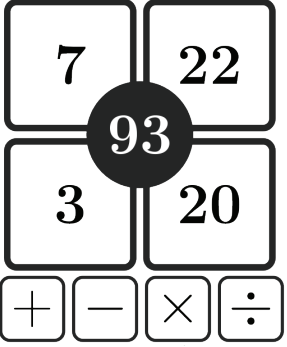
4NUMBERS

CONSTRUCTED BY C. CHANG
AT 4NUMS.COM

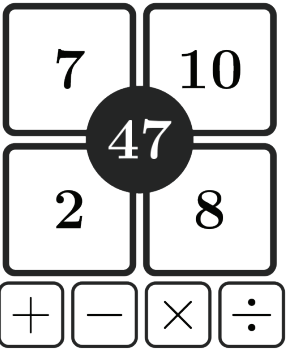
Use the four numbers in the corners, and the operands (+, -, X, and ÷) to **build an equation** to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) + 1 = 28 and 1 + (7 X 3) + 6 = 28



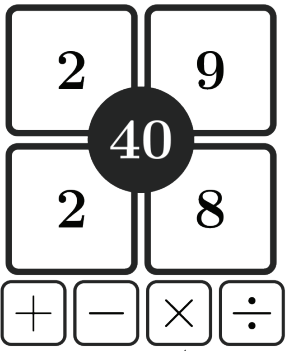
Hard 1 - 1 Solution



Hard 2 - 1 Solution



Easy 1 - 1 Solution



Easy 2 - 2 Solutions

WORDSEARCH

CONSTRUCTED BY TOM HOUSTON
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Help with Today's Crossword Puzzle?

T N C E A S E D Y E R S H L T
U R O Q T L C A E S A R U O K
C E U T E A R Y M C E A R C J
K H O S I Q L L H T A L S K S
E A Y M S F A I Z A A F T I T
R B E U E R Y I E E C R L N A
D L J M O G R K R N A E O E I
E R D T K R A E C R D S K T L
A A T Q I S T C Z I I C S E O
I I E C N S P O M C N O A H R
L L H A C K E R E E A G P H E
E I A U S T I N S S G N I H D
D N S I G I L U S E L R O Y H
U G R I C X L D R A W N G L Q
E S T A T E S Y S I S A L A A

ALIEN
CAESAR
CANOLA
CEASE
CIRRI
CORNU
DECAF
DELIS
DRAWN
DYERS
EASILY
ELEMI
HACEK

HACKER
HURST
LITTORAL
LOCK IN
MESSRS
NAANS
NOTIFY
OMEGA
RAILING
REGGAE
REHAB
RICES
SIGIL

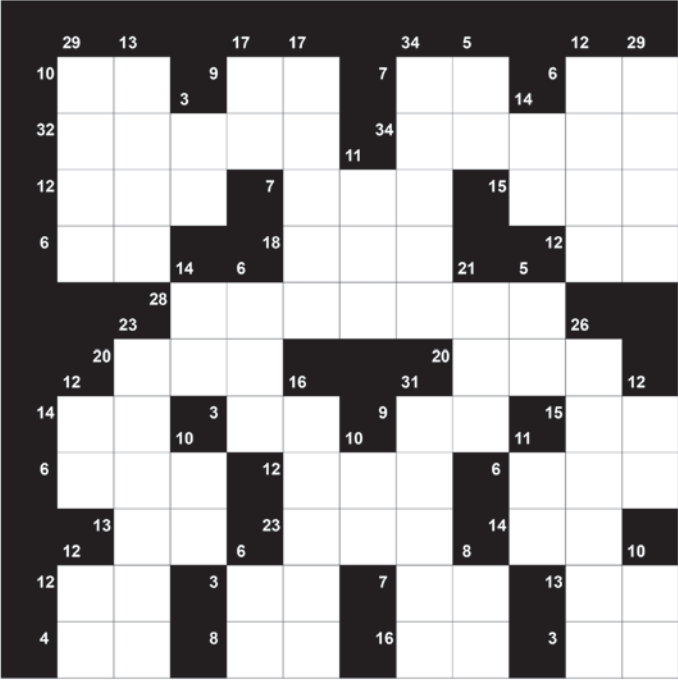
SISAL
STERE
TAROT
TEARY
TRUSS
TUCKER
UGRIC
AILED
ALFRESCO
AUSTIN
ESTATES
TAILORED

KAKURO

CONSTRUCTED BY EPOCH TIMES STAFF

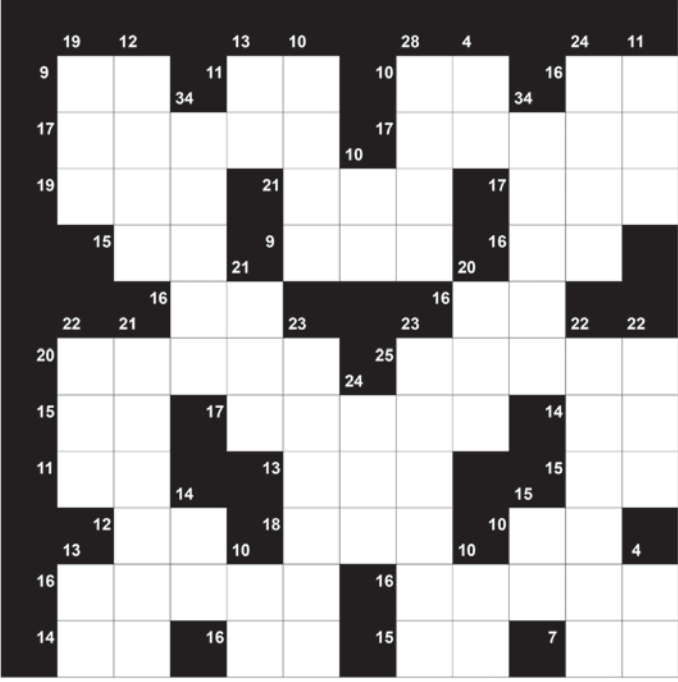
Kakuro puzzles are like crosswords that use numbers instead of words. The goal is to fill the blank squares associated with a clue (called a "run") with the numbers 1-9 so that the numbers add up to the corresponding clues. Like Sudoku, digits in a run cannot repeat. When the grid is filled, the puzzle is complete.

Large: Easy



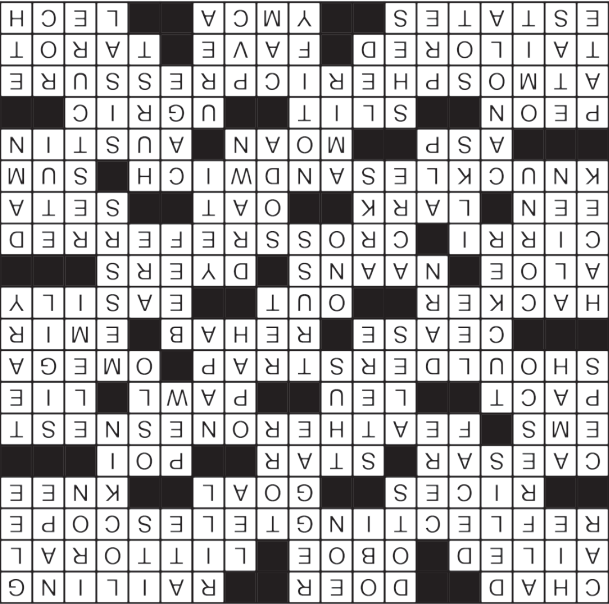
WORK SPACE

Large: Hard

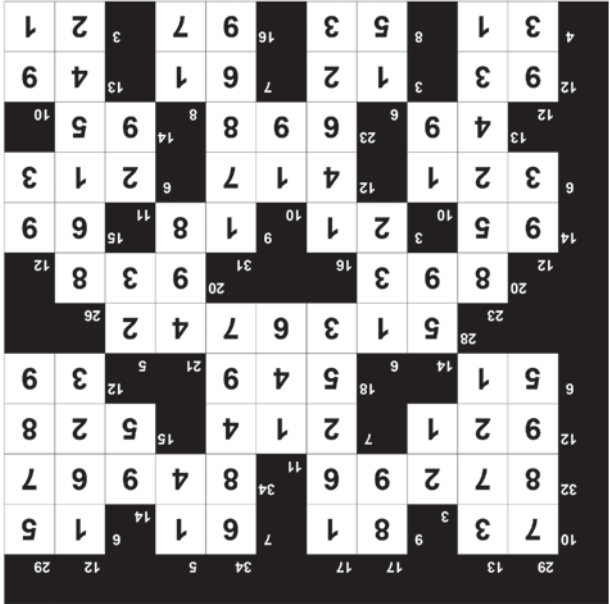


SOLUTIONS

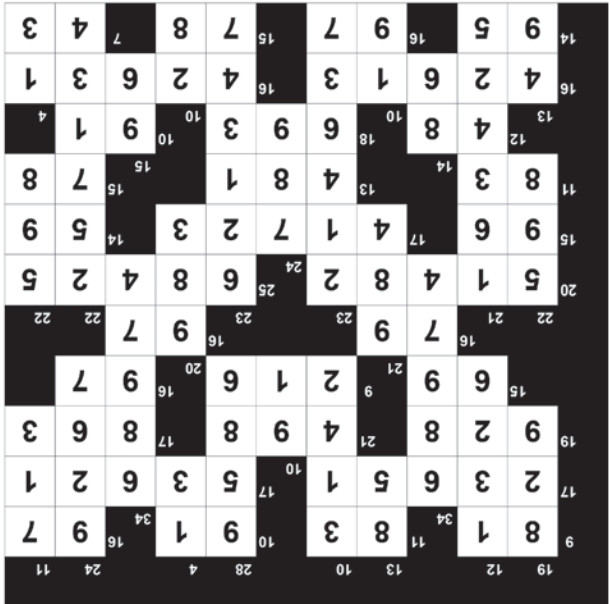
CROSSWORD



KAKURO LARGE: EASY



KAKURO LARGE: HARD



4 NUMBERS

HARD 1

$(22 + 15 - 24) \times 5$

HARD 2

$22 \times 3 + 20 + 7$

EASY 1

$10 \times 8 \div 2 + 7$

EASY 2

$(9 - 2 - 2) \times 8$

$(9 - 2 \times 2) \times 8$

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK



6 Tips for Parenting in the Present

BARBARA DANZA

My family and I were recently enjoying some old videos from our early days, back when our children were toddling around and their parents were still figuring out what on earth they were doing. (Update: They're still trying to figure that out.)

What struck me as we watched was how much I missed of the moments that were caught on-screen—my daughter's face as she was surprised by something, my son's attempts to get our attention about something else, their expressions, and what they were focused on.

I was there and so was my husband. We were all joyfully together. And yet, there were elements of those simple moments in time that I had missed as I was tidying up, or helping someone with something, or doing other parent-ish things, and that the camera picked up. It made me think about how many moments I might have missed along the way.

From the time we become parents, we begin to receive this piece of advice in various ways: Enjoy their childhood while you can, even though the day-to-day can be challenging, for it goes by so fast.

"The days are long but the years are short," as they say.

While not the easiest thing to hear sometimes, especially when your infant is up crying all night or your teenager is speaking to you in a way that makes you question your

ability to parent at all—the truth of the sentiment becomes clearer as you advance through your parenthood journey.

While it's impossible to notice everything, it's also increasingly possible to miss far too much, as our attention falls prey to distractions and hustle culture. What we don't want is to look back with regret for having worked too much or, worse, having being distracted by our phones, and thus missing opportunities to truly be there for our children in all the ways they need us.

A goal I think no parent would regret is to improve the quality of attention you give your children. Here are some ideas about how to do that.

Make Time for Yourself

Perhaps a counterintuitive first step, but one way to not be thoroughly distracted when interacting with your children is to allow yourself time to tackle the things that distract you. Waking up before anyone else in your home is a great way to do just that.

Whether you want time to read, quietly enjoy a cup of coffee, take a long shower, or get work done, schedule time for yourself to free your mind later.

Step Away from Your Phone

These addictive devices are hard for most people to ignore. Think of the message you're sending to your kids when, in their presence, you're giving all of your attention to a tiny, glowing rectangle. If you were a fly on

▲ **Make time to move your body for increased energy and reduced stress. A great way to get this done is to play an active game with your children.**

It will take work, but simplifying your life makes room for the essential.

the wall watching the scene unfold, you'd feel sorry.

Make a rule to ignore your phone in your children's presence. Plug it in far away from arm's reach and know that you'll check it when they go to bed or some other time. You don't want this, of all things, to get in the way of being the best parent you can be.

Exercise

Make time to move your body for increased energy and reduced stress. A great way to get this done is to play an active game with your children. They will love it!

Meditate

Meditation, over time, can help you to calm your mind and slow down, providing much more room for you to be present in any given moment. Give it a try.

Let Go

Perhaps you're overcommitted in areas of your life that are a lower priority than your family is. Perhaps you have too much stuff in your home that is taking time to maintain. Perhaps you're overcome with negative emotions or stress about one thing or another.

In either case, it will take work, but simplifying your life makes room for the essential.

Become Curious

When's the last time you looked upon your children with curiosity? These little individuals, with their unique character traits, temperaments, and personalities have as much to teach you as you have to teach them.

Don't lose sight of what a miraculous thing this journey is and these people are. Look upon them with wide-eyed wonder, appreciate them for who they are, and you'll find it difficult to miss the precious moments of their childhood.

Parents, Your Kids Are More Flexible Than You Are

EMMA FREIRE

"I really want to do it. But I think it will be so hard!"

I said this to a fellow mother a few years ago. We were discussing my desire to move my son's crib out of my bedroom and into the same room as his older sister. Her reply surprised me.

"Maybe it will be easy," she said. "Sometimes parents get very worried about things that aren't such a big deal for children."

I confess that I didn't take her advice. I was too fearful to change our sleeping arrangements until we subsequently moved to a new house. But I've thought back on the

conversation quite a few times since then. That mother was on to something. Time after time, I've gotten all worked up about imposing a change on my children that then turned out to go over very easily.

Here are some examples: I recently realized—to my shame—that my daughter had fallen into some unhealthy eating patterns. I started making elaborate plans to improve her nutritional intake. However, it quickly became clear to me that even a few small changes made a big impact.

I became more steadfast about refusing requests for unhealthy snacks, and I insisted that she take at least a few bites of the healthy

meals I cooked. At some point along the way, I'd labeled my daughter a "difficult eater." The truth is, with just a bit more nudging on my part, she's quite amenable to healthy food.

When my son was a baby, he adored his pacifier. I began to dread the battle I imagined we would face when it finally came time to wean him from it. I made several attempts to limit his pacifier use exclusively to his crib. But whenever there was a disruption to our routine, that rule would get tossed out the window.

Then, one day, when he was about 18 months old, my son lost his only pacifier on an outing. I decided that

was a sign he should go cold turkey. And you know what happened? Nothing! He barely noticed it was gone, and he's been pacifier-free ever since.

Parents know in theory that children are very flexible and can adapt to pretty much anything. So why do we get so mentally worked up about making changes?

Maybe the reason is that these changes will be hard on us. It is the parents who are the inflexible ones, not the kids. I'd fallen into a routine of giving my daughter certain foods. That was easy for me. It was convenient to hand my son his pacifier to get him to stop crying. I was resisting change because it

required more effort on my part.

To be clear, I'm not suggesting children always easily adapt to any change their parents have to impose on them. There will, of course, be struggles, for changes often mean tears and tantrums. However, as parents we need to acknowledge that many times it is we who are the problem, not our children.

Emma Freire is a writer living in Sao Paulo, Brazil. She has also been published in The Federalist and The American Conservative. This article was originally published on Intellectual Takeout.



One of the best ways to heal your body is through a nutritious diet.

ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Antioxidant-rich foods like blueberries, citrus fruits, and nuts all support the liver in multiple ways.

Top Foods to Improve Your Liver Health

Support your liver so it can help fuel and detoxify your body

LISA RICHARDS

Though people rarely consider it, food is medicine. So one of the best ways to heal your body is through a nutritious diet. And because your liver is a critical organ for processing what you eat, it makes perfect sense to eat foods that support its health. Caring for your liver is especially important when your gut is imbalanced. Your liver has to filter, process, and break down harmful compounds in the foods you eat, as well as toxins that are created in your gut by yeast or bacterial overgrowth. Alcohol, drugs, and environmental pollutants can take their toll on your liver too, causing it to become inefficient and sluggish. Fortunately, there are plenty of foods that can protect your liver and help it function at its best by stimulating the production of glucose and bile. Antioxidant-rich foods also shield your liver from free radical harm, while other plant-based foods can help cleanse the liver by increasing its ability to flush toxins from the body.

Foods That May Harm Your Liver

First, a quick note about the foods to avoid if you're concerned about your liver health. The obvious candidates are excessive alcohol and foods that are high in sugar. These have been repeatedly shown to cause long-term liver damage. Your favorite bread might be a

bad choice too! Many breads and pastas are full of refined carbs that can contribute to fatty liver disease. Best to stick with whole grains.

Foods That Can Improve Your Liver Health

In the long-term, a healthy diet can help to maintain and improve your liver health. Let's take a look at the top nine liver-friendly foods.

Garlic

Garlic is a powerful medicine and almost a pharmacy in itself for treating a poorly-functioning liver. Garlic causes your liver to activate specific enzymes that stimulate detoxification, helping clear harmful toxins from the body. Garlic also contains selenium, an important mineral and antioxidant. Selenium plays a role in activating the liver enzymes that keep your liver functioning optimally. Garlic may even help to speed recovery from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). This chronic liver disease has become more common in recent decades. Studies have shown that garlic can reduce body weight and body fat mass, which significantly reduces the burden on the liver.

Citrus Fruits

Grapefruit, lemons, and limes are great for boosting the liver's cleansing powers. And a little goes a long way! Citrus has been found to help in the production of important detoxification enzymes, particularly ALT and AST. A study on mice found that lemon juice was helpful to those with liver impairment. The mice were first given ethanol then treated with lemon juice, which was shown to raise their liver enzymes back to normal. This significantly improved the histopathological changes in their liver. It was also found that other harmful effects of the ethanol were reversed by the lemon juice, such as increased lipid

peroxidation and increased liver triglyceride levels. It appears that other citrus fruits (grapefruit, oranges, lemons, and limes) are all excellent at improving liver function. This may be due to the variety of compounds including vitamin C, essential oils, pectin, and flavonoids. As an antioxidant, Vitamin C helps to prevent oxidative damage and lipid peroxidation, while pectin benefits the integrity of the gut lining.

Alcohol, drugs, and environmental pollutants can take their toll on your liver too, causing it to become inefficient and sluggish.

Cruciferous Vegetables and Leafy Greens

Eating vegetables was never so important. Cruciferous veggies such as broccoli and cauliflower are rich in glucosinolate, a compound that helps the liver to produce detoxifying enzymes. At the same time, the sulfur in these plants is great for supporting liver health. Leafy greens such as spinach and kale are packed with chlorophyll, a powerful antioxidant. Chlorophyll helps to protect liver cells and other body tissues by increasing phase II biotransformation enzymes. These are the specific enzymes that work to optimize liver functioning and support your body's natural elimination of harmful toxins. Try to include salads in your diet wherever possible—they don't need to be boring or expensive. A number of animal studies have found that chlorophyllin may even

reduce the risk for both liver cancer and aflatoxin-induced liver damage, thanks to its ability to increase these phase II enzymes. It's also believed that they play a part in neutralizing heavy metals that have entered the body.

Turmeric

One of the most important herbs of all, turmeric's liver-loving properties means that it is often included in liver tonics. As a potent antioxidant, turmeric helps to prevent oxidative damage to the liver and ward off free radicals. Numerous studies have shown that the active ingredient in turmeric, curcumin, can help to eliminate lipid radicals in the cell membrane of the liver, making it a lipid-soluble antioxidant.

In addition, curcumin has anti-inflammatory and antifibrotic properties that protect the liver against damage. It can help to treat and prevent fatty liver, hepatic inflammation, alcoholic hepatitis (necrosis) and progressive alcoholic cirrhosis (fibrosis).

Nuts A fantastic source of the amino acid arginine, nuts are a perfect addition to almost any diet. They help the liver in clearing out toxins like ammonia, as well as boosting levels of glutathione and omega-3 fatty acids, which all support natural liver cleansing. Nuts contain a blend of fatty acids, bioactive compounds, and essential nutrients. Although they have a high-fat content, most of this is from beneficial monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Nuts are also rich in vitamin E, a valuable antioxidant. The phytosterols and polyphenols in nuts are helpful in reducing low-density lipoprotein (bad cholesterol) concentrations and free radicals.

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Beets

Bright red beets are rich in betaine, a compound that encourages liver health and can help to reverse fatty liver disease. Betaine helps to defend the body's bile ducts which are vital for assisting in healthy digestion. Bile breaks down food in the stomach and keeps the liver functioning properly. By allowing bile to flow more freely, betaine supports the movement of food through the intestines and assists indigestion. Beets also increase oxygen efficiency in the blood, which in turn helps the liver cleanse the blood of harmful toxins. As a good source of vitamin C and fiber, beets can promote the natural cleansing of the digestive system and lighten the burden on the liver.

Green Tea

Green tea leaves are rich in catechins, a specific type of antioxidant known to boost liver function. Green tea's particular catechins work to protect your body from harmful free radicals that are known to cause cellular damage and inflammation. They are especially beneficial for assisting liver function and have been found to

protect your liver from the damaging effects of toxic substances such as food chemicals and alcohol.

It's also been found that concentrated green tea extract can help to block the amount of fat stored in the liver. Studies on obese mice showed that daily ingestion of green tea prevented them from developing severe fatty liver disease. It also improved their liver function and reversed any decline in their antioxidant levels.

Although green tea contains a small amount of caffeine, it's possible to take caffeine-free green tea supplements to benefit your liver.

Blueberries

Of all the fruits, blueberries are perhaps the most beneficial for liver health. Blueberries are packed with powerful plant compounds called phytonutrients which can help prevent urinary tract infections. They're also known for their anti-inflammatory properties and high vitamin C content, which helps to keep the capillaries and blood vessels of the liver healthy. Their fiber and potassium content also support normal liver function. But most importantly, blueberries are an excellent source of anthocyanins, the particular type of antioxidants that make them blue.

Garlic is powerful medicine and almost a pharmacy in itself for treating a poorly-functioning liver.

Anthocyanins are incredible antioxidants that have been shown to inhibit the growth of cancer cells in the liver. Cranberries are also a good source of anthocyanins.

Oily Fish

Fish such as salmon, sardines, and mackerel are some of your best sources of omega-3 fatty acids. These are the healthy fats that work to reduce inflammation and keep cholesterol levels in balance. In this way, omega-3 has been found to help prevent "bad" fats from accumulating in the liver. These bad fats are a major cause of fatty liver disease, which can be fatal. Omega 3 fatty acids help normalize liver enzymes, reduce inflammation, and improve insulin resistance. Eating plenty of omega-3-rich foods is important for keeping omega-6 in balance. Many of us exceed our recommended intake of omega-6 fats, which are present in plant oils and tend to promote disease-causing inflammation. Too much omega-6 in the diet is a serious risk factor for the development of liver disease, so it just makes sense to eat as much oily fish as possible!

Lisa Richards is a nutritionist and the creator of the Candida Diet. She has been featured on Today, Women's Health magazine, Reader's Digest, and Shape, among others. Through her website, theCandidaDiet.com, she explains the benefits of a low-sugar, anti-inflammatory diet.



ALL PHOTOS BY CAROLINE CHAMBERS

TABLE FOR TWO

Coconut Curry

Gets a Backyard Makeover

In this summery steak bowl, a rich, Thai-inspired curry sauce does double-duty at the grill



GRILLED COCONUT CURRY STEAK AND MANGO BOWLS

SERVES 2

- 1 (15-ounce) can coconut milk**
- Juice of 2 limes**
- 3 tablespoons red curry paste**
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar**
- 1 tablespoon sriracha**
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce**
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt (use 2 teaspoons if not using the fish sauce)**
- 1 pound skirt or flank steak (you may have to buy a 2 pound steak, cut it in half, and freeze one half)**
- 4 ounces rice vermicelli noodles (sometimes called thin rice noodles or rice sticks), cooked**
- 1 1/2 cups finely chopped romaine lettuce**
- 1 mango, chopped**

Optional: lime wedges, cilantro, and peanuts, for garnish

Nestle a gallon-sized Ziploc bag into a medium bowl and open it to allow you to easily pour the marinade in. Pour coconut milk, lime juice, curry paste, brown sugar, sriracha, fish sauce, and salt into the bag. Zip the bag closed and use your hands to thoroughly combine the marinade. Add steak, remove all air from the bag, and zip closed. If you're cooking right away, allow the steak to marinate at room temperature for at least 30 minutes. Preferably, marinate the steak in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.

When you're ready to cook, remove the steak from the bag and transfer to a rimmed baking sheet. Pour the marinade into a small heat-proof (no plastic handles!) pot. Allow steak to come to room temperature for 15 to 30 minutes before grilling. Preheat grill to 425 degrees F.

Place pot of marinade on the back of the grill. Grill meat for 4 minutes per side (for medium-rare), using a basting or pastry brush to brush the marinade onto the steak before and after you flip it. Keep the grill on so that the marinade can continue to cook and reduce into a thick sauce, an additional 7 to 10 minutes. If your grill is too small to fit the pot, you can reduce the sauce on your stovetop instead (see Tips).

Transfer the steak to a cutting board and allow to rest for several minutes. Slice against the grain and serve with noodles, romaine, and mango, plus any additional accompaniments as desired. Carefully, being sure not to touch the handle, remove the pot of marinade from the grill and spoon it over the beef and noodles.

Tips

If you don't have a grill, cook the steak in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat for 4 to 5 minutes per side. Cook the marinade on the stovetop over medium heat at the same time, until thickened, 8 to 10 minutes.

If you wish to cook for four, just double the amount of steak, noodles, and romaine. The marinade doesn't need to be doubled.

Want to add more veggies? Try adding steamed broccoli, thinly sliced red bell peppers, or cucumbers to your bowls.

Not into beef? Try boneless, skinless chicken thighs or breasts instead.



CAROLINE CHAMBERS

Every homecook has an arsenal of favorite recipes that they return to over and over again. Growing up, my family ate tuna noodle casserole, taquitos, stuffed baked potatoes, and spaghetti carbonara on a weekly rotation.

At the time, my siblings and I were convinced that they were the only things my mom knew how to cook, but now that I'm feeding a kid of my own, I get it, Mom!

These were simple, hearty meals that relied heavily on pantry items—meaning my parents didn't have to squeeze in a trip to the grocery store on top of everything else they were juggling while raising three kids. And not only were they able to quickly get these meals onto the dinner table, but they also knew that all three of us would actually eat them.

Fast forward 20 or so years, and my husband George and I have just celebrated our seven-year anniversary, and are making our own mealtime traditions.

Milestone Meals

In seven years, we've gone through a lot of "favorite recipe" phases. When we lived in Coronado, California, while George was in the Navy, we had a teeny tiny outdoor space—a fitting accompaniment to our even tinier indoor space—and with it came my very first grill.

It also feels important to mention that we signed the lease on said tiny home without actually seeing it in person, and it didn't have an oven. We cooked absolutely everything on the grill during our two years in Coronado, including enough grilled pizza to feed the entire Navy.

From Coronado, we moved north to Palo Alto, California. I was working full-time at a culinary consulting firm in San Francisco, meaning at least a two-hour commute every single day. For the first time in our marriage, George was met with the daunting task of putting dinner on the table every night.

George is a lot of things, but "chef" is not one of them, so I would call him every single night as I left the office and walk him through how to prepare dinner. Sometimes, I'd stay on speakerphone throughout the entire drive, walking into our apartment just as he was pulling dinner out of the oven. George's specialty during this phase of our lives was roasted chicken and veggies—

throw it all on a sheet pan, season it however you're feelin' that night, roast it, gobble it up.

Our second year in the South Bay was the Year of the Cookbook. I was writing my cookbook, "Just Married," so our kitchen was exploding with delicious food. We'd eat the same meal over and over again as I tweaked it until it was perfect, and then I'd move on and we'd never eat it again.

It's impossible to point to one go-to meal from that time period, but one of George's highlights was definitely when I was working on the desserts chapter. We essentially only ate sweets for an entire month.

And now, life in Carmel. We moved down here in 2017, after George graduated from business school. Since then, we've already moved twice, I've published my cookbook, and we had our first baby in January. To say it's been a whirlwind couple of years would be an understatement.

We've found ourselves cooking together more than ever, since we're each too busy to pull off getting a meal on the table by ourselves. But a beautiful meal, eaten together, is really important to us, so we find the time for it almost every night of the week, even if that means we have to tag-team the cooking between the baby's bath time, dinnertime, playtime, milk time, and all of the other "times" involved in raising a child.

When we're busy, which we seem to always be these days, our tried and true family favorite is a big bowl of curry.

A Summery Take

We like our curries every which way: Chicken, beef, tofu, or shrimp, with any combination of vegetables. Sometimes over rice, sometimes over noodles, as they do in northern Thailand.

I saw a can of coconut milk in the pantry when I was hunting for something the other day, and realized that we hadn't made a curry in months, not since the weather heated up. I instantly got a craving, but knew I didn't actually want to sit down to a piping hot bowl of curry on a hot summer night, nor did I want to heat up my kitchen by cooking it.

I created this dish as a way to get my curry fix in the summertime. Flank steak is tossed in a coconut curry marinade, which is then reduced to create a creamy, delectable sauce to pour over the grilled steak, crisp romaine, and slippery rice noodles. I love the cool, crisp base of romaine and rice noodles, but if you're in the mood for something heartier, make a rice bowl instead.

The bowl is topped off with chunks of fresh mango for a sweet contrast to the spicy sauce. It's a delightful way to enjoy curry in the summertime.

Caroline Chambers is a recipe developer, food writer, and author of "Just Married: A Cookbook for Newlyweds." She currently lives in Carmel, Calif., with her husband, George, and baby boy, Mattis.

Pooja Mor

A Voice for the Voiceless

JOCELYN NEO

Being a fashion model isn't just about walking the runways. For Pooja Mor, a model with a cause and the recipient of the "Young Achiever of The Year" award at Vogue Women of The Year 2019, she has become a voice for the voiceless. At the award ceremony, the supermodel fearlessly spoke about the worst genocide unfolding in the world—the persecution of Falun Gong in China.

Falun Gong is an ancient mind-body discipline based on the tenets of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance.

Mor, who hails from Ahmedabad, India, is now based in New York. She took her first steps into the modeling world in 2012 after winning the "Clean & Clear Ahmedabad Times Fresh Face" event. Her international debut came in 2016 when she walked the runway at Nicolas Ghesquiere's Louis Vuitton Cruise 2016 show in Palm Springs, California.

Since then, the 27-year-old has gone on to work with the likes of Elie Saab, Alexander McQueen, Tory Burch, Dolce & Gabbana, Calvin Klein, and more. Mor received the "Model of the Year" award at Vogue Beauty Awards 2016.

In 2018, the fashion icon received a "NEW WAVE: Creatives" award by the British Fashion Council. Early this year, Mor also gave a powerful talk on how adversity can be a good thing, at TEDx Talks.

Despite having all these achievements under her belt, it was only recently that Mor, who also holds a degree in computer engineering, realized the meaning of true achievement.

At the Vogue Women of The Year 2019 awards, which were held in Mumbai, India, on Oct. 19, Mor shared her realization with an audience composed of international and Bollywood celebrities.

"I recently realized what it is to truly achieve something. It was when I started working not only for myself but for others and becoming the voice for the voiceless," Mor said at her acceptance speech, a video of which was later uploaded to her Instagram account but is currently unavailable.

For the past few years, Mor has been focusing on a cause that is close to her heart—raising awareness of the persecution of Falun Dafa in China.

Mor was first introduced to Falun Dafa, also known as Falun Gong, in 2014.

"I felt it was such a beautiful meditation practice, so peaceful and always made me so positive," Mor told The Epoch Times via email.

Mor couldn't accept it when she heard that the Chinese Communist Party had banned the peaceful meditation practice in July 1999, after the number of people practicing it skyrocketed within five years from its introduction to the public in 1992.

Since 1999, "millions of people who practice Falun Gong have been subject to wrongful imprisonment, 'brainwashing' sessions, and torture, with thousands of deaths, confirmed in custody," according to the Falun Dafa Information Center.

In recent years, media outlets have also

reported that the communist regime has been harvesting organs from prisoners of conscience, with the majority being from Falun Gong practitioners.

"A government is supposed to protect its people, and I was not able to believe such a thing could be happening, especially to a group of people who follow the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance," Mor said.

She said it wasn't easy for her to come to terms with it. She started doing her own research and watching documentaries on forced organ harvesting in China, and she came across many articles confirming that these things are still happening.

So when her agent asked her if she had a cause she wanted to raise awareness about, the answer was obvious. She started writing articles and talking to people about the persecution. "Most of the people I talked to were shocked to know about it and couldn't understand why such a peaceful practice is being persecuted in China," she said.

While Mor has been actively raising awareness about the persecution of Falun Gong in China on her social media platforms, she had never spoken in public about her own faith in Falun Dafa.

The opportunity presented itself when she heard that Vogue India had chosen her as the "Young Achiever of The Year."

When Mor started to pen her acceptance speech, it was just a regular speech thanking everyone related to her professional career.

Then she asked herself, "What have I really achieved in life?" and "What makes me an achiever in my own heart or consciousness?"

She realized that "true achievement comes when [you're] not only working for yourself, but more importantly, when you work for others and stand up for people who don't have a voice, and to stand up for a bigger reason that needs light in this world."

"Once I completed the speech, a sweet contentment rushed through me, which made me a better person. That's a true achievement in my eyes."

"By standing up for others, I realized what it means to truly achieve something in life," Mor concluded in her speech.

Mor told The Epoch Times, "I remain grateful for Vogue India's award, and when I gave the speech that night, I was touched by how everyone responded to it, wanting to learn more about the human rights violation."

But then, she said, "after I posted the video of the speech on Instagram, my agents were approached by Vogue India requesting to edit or take down the video because they 'don't encourage the use of their platform for personal political statements.' I think it's just an indication that a lot more awareness and clarification needs to be done in this industry, as well as many others."

Mor reaffirmed that she will continue to raise awareness of what is happening in China.

"I can't sit and watch millions of innocent people being wrongfully persecuted and their organs being taken without consent and without anesthesia. I have to stand up for it—it's my cause, and that is, to me, being a voice for the voiceless."



Fashion model Pooja Mor meditates in Central Park, Manhattan, on April 19, 2016
BENJAMIN CHASTEEN/THE EPOCH TIMES

“I recently realized what it is to truly achieve something. It was when I started working not only for myself but for others and becoming the voice for the voiceless.”

Pooja Mor



Pooja Mor received the "Young Achiever Of The Year" award at Vogue Women of the Year 2019 on Oct. 19, 2019.

COURTESY OF BOBBY LEE



Pooja Mor wearing a "Falun Dafa is Good" shirt.

She asked herself, 'What have I really achieved in life?' and 'What makes me an achiever in my own heart?'

What Does Ballet Have to Do With Classical Chinese Dance and Shen Yun?

CATHERINE YANG

Classical Chinese dancer Gu Yun began training professionally as a dancer at age 14. Over the course of his career, he has witnessed a growing interest in classical Chinese dance around the world. But he says not all Chinese dance is truly authentic. Gu attended Beijing Dance Academy at age 20 to specialize in classical Chinese dance and was part of an intensive program that condensed a six-year curriculum into four years. He went on to earn a number of prestigious awards, including the 2003 First Prize for trio dance at China’s most renowned competition, the Peach & Plum Cup Dance Competition, the Teacher’s Award, first prize at the Beijing Dance Competition, and the Shandong Province Dance competition, among others.

His illustrious career was seemingly cut short when Gu sustained an injury in his torso. To his dismay, he realized he would have to retire from the stage. Nonetheless, he wanted to continue working with classical Chinese dance, so Gu took a teaching position in Los Angeles.

How Shen Yun Is Different
In the United States, he was intrigued to discover that New York-based Shen Yun Performing Arts was sparking widespread interest in classical Chinese dance all across the country. He finally saw a performance of Shen Yun for himself and was so inspired artistically that he sought to join the company. At Shen Yun, Gu quickly discerned many differences from the training he was used to, not the least of which was the fact that ballet was nowhere to be found, not even in teaching dance fundamentals. “I am, you could say, a product of Beijing Dance Academy and trained in this particular hybrid Chinese-ballet style, so



I know exactly which aspects are ballet and which are Chinese dance,” Gu said. For many years, Gu explained, Beijing Dance Academy taught this hybrid style, which originated decades ago, when dance teachers from the Soviet Union were invited to the academy. The school wanted to create a formal training system that could effectively teach large numbers of students in Chinese dance, a form that had been previously passed on only in an apprenticeship-like manner. So the teachers drew upon what they knew, which was Russian classical ballet, to give more structure to the teaching of the myriad Chinese dance techniques and movements. This, as a side effect, introduced ballet movements into Chinese dance. One can clearly see this mixed style in dances in which the upper body follows Chinese dance movements but the footwork is almost all ballet, Gu said. Those more familiar with dance might also be able to detect that the Beijing Dance Academy style of dance uses the aesthetic of ballet, that its sense of beauty actually

comes from the language and culture of ballet. What was done at the academy was replicated in schools elsewhere, and what Beijing did set the tone for what was taught across the nation. But now, things are changing. “This Chinese-ballet hybrid became the basis of what was dubbed ‘classical Chinese dance’ by the Beijing school, but in the last decade, Beijing Dance Academy has also been removing the ballet parts and is trying to rediscover real Chinese dance,” Gu said. “But Shen Yun, from the beginning, has done without ballet. “Shen Yun has its own way of teaching [classical Chinese dance]. ... Shen Yun’s training from the ground up has been Chinese dance, whether it be in the pedagogy or the choreography or other aspects. They’ve never incorporated ballet.” Perhaps most fascinating for Gu was that the beauty this dance style achieved was entirely its own, something drawn purely from traditional Chinese culture. “Take the ways of movement, for

example. These are really natural ways of movement,” Gu said, explaining how the limbs and body parts work together when one takes a step to walk, or turn, or bend. It’s a language of movement you can see in things like tai chi, bagua, and Chinese martial arts. Gu has done some research himself, finding historical drawings and images of some movements in ancient Chinese culture. “[Different styles of dance] all have their own body language to express their views of human nature and have their own inherent characteristics,” Gu said. Even between different styles of Chinese dance, he says one can notice a big difference. Many dancers in China have foundational training in Chinese dance. But if you use those movements together with the language of contemporary dance to tell a story, the effect is quite different from using the body language of traditional Chinese culture to tell the same story.

How Shen Yun Looks to Traditional Chinese Culture for Inspiration
What Shen Yun is after, he says, is expressiveness and the authentic, traditional Chinese culture. To find that authenticity, Shen Yun’s choreographers have delved far into history, looking to ancient dance forms that were performed in palaces for sacred rites and rituals, or for entertaining emperors and foreign dignitaries. When China’s last dynasty ended and the country became a republic, some of these elegant court dances continued to be passed down in Chinese opera houses, where they developed and absorbed theatrical and regional influences. The result was an exceptionally rich and varied art form that Shen Yun is now working to revive and reinvigorate. Today, Shen Yun is not the only company interested in classical Chinese dance, but it is safe to say that it is the most authentic in its approach.



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